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THE NEW YORKER

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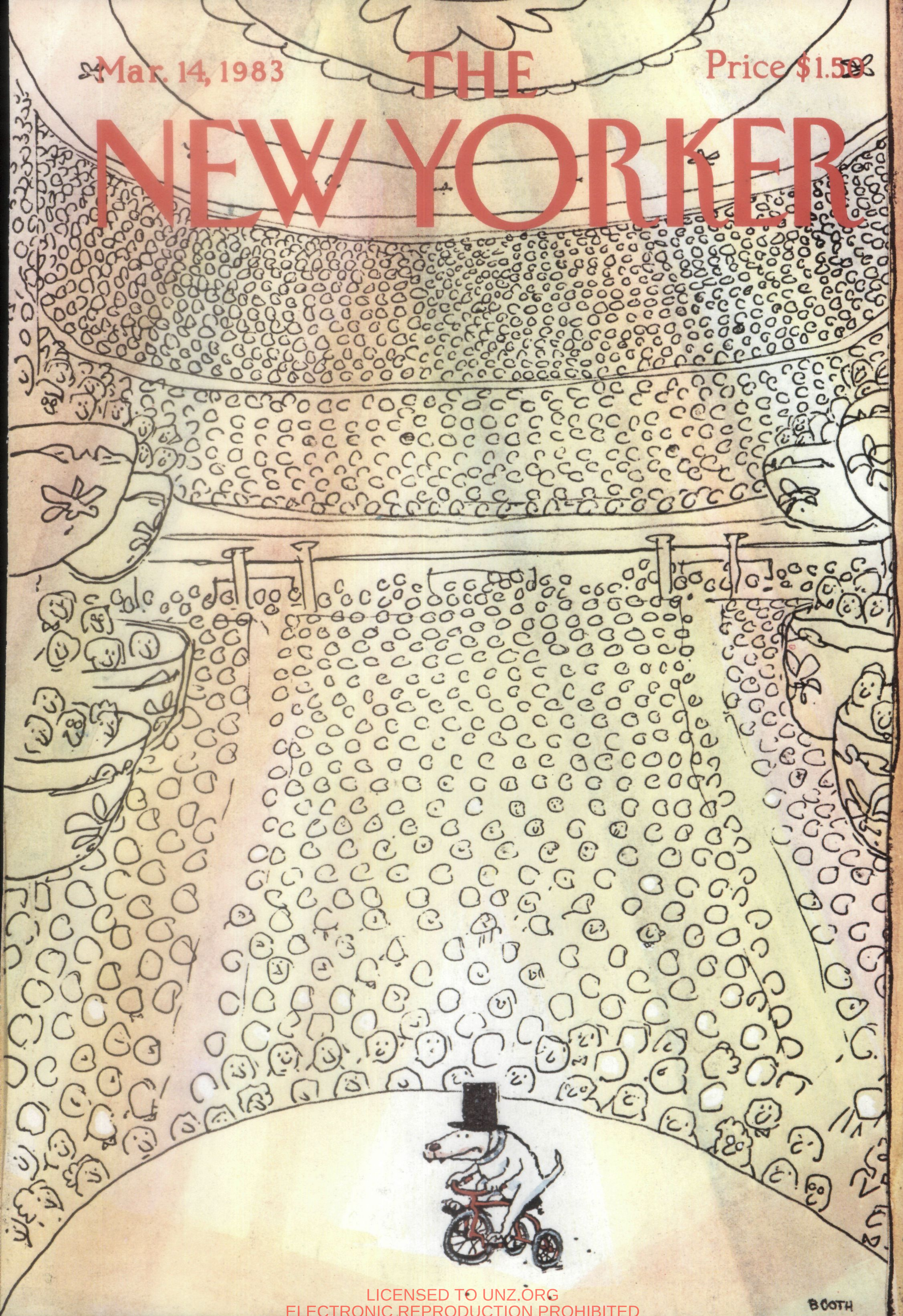

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Angels Fall—A welcomely conventional play by Lanford Wilson, in the genre of Robert E. Sherwood's "The Petrified Forest." Six characters in the shelter of a small mission church in the West prove to have a good many interesting things on their minds; these characters are superbly embodied by Barnard Hughes, Fritz Weaver, Danton Stone, Nancy Snyder, Brian Tarantina, and Tanya Berezin. (Reviewed in our issue of 1/31/83.) (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Buck—A new play by Ronald Ribman. Previews Wednesday, March 9. Opens officially on Thursday, March 10. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 247-0393. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Cats—A musical version of T. S. Eliot's "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats." Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, choreography by Gillian Lynne, and direction (and some lyrics) by Trevor Nunn. A superb spectacle, which may run for years and give cats the right to vote and hold office. (10/18/82) (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6222. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

The Entertainer—In this revival, Nicol Williamson appears in the role that John Osborne wrote for Laurence Olivier twenty-five years ago, yet even Mr. Williamson, fine actor that he is, cannot conceal the ear-bending tedium of Archie Rice, the tacky vaudevillian who vents his spleen on his family and subjects the audience to his atrocious monologues. Frances Cuka is very good as his abused, gin-soaked wife. (1/31/83) (Roundabout Stage One, 333 W. 23rd St. 242-7800. Nightly at 8. Matinées Wednesday and Saturday at 2. Closes Saturday, March 12.)

Equity Library Theatre—A revival of the George Abbott–Frank Loesser musical **WHERE'S CHARLEY?** will be the sixth in this season's series of eight productions. Opens Thursday, March 10, and will run through Sunday, April 3. (Equity Library Theatre, 103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

Extremities—Susan Sarandon in a play by William Mastrosimone. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays and Sundays at 3.)

Foxfire—Jessica Tandy and Hume Cronyn are irresistibly tart and tender in a play about life in Appalachia, where the old seek in vain to cling to their old customs and the young light out for the fleshpots of Florida. (11/22/82) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Greater Tuna—Joe Sears and Jaston Williams, a pair of nimble, clever actors, portray twenty citizens (m. and f.) of the third-smallest town in Texas, in a play that is as broad as a cartoon but is also sharp and satiric and frequently funny. It was written by Mr. Williams, Mr. Sears, and their director, Ed Howard. (11/1/82) (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The Holly and the Ivy—An English domestic play that all but stifles in its own gentility. The late Wynyard Browne was the dramatist. Staged by Lindsay Anderson. (11/29/82) (Susan Bloch Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. 242-7800. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday at 2. Closes Sunday, March 13.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Through Sunday, March 20: Gilbert and Sullivan's **PATIENCE.** (Eastside, 334 E. 74th St. 861-2288. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays at 2, and Saturdays and Sundays at 4.)

Little Shop of Horrors—Based on Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is untainted by camp. The spirited, tuneful rock score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman wrote the witty book and witty lyrics; the singing and comic acting by the entire company are a credit to Mr. Ashman, the inventive director. Martin P. Robinson designed and manipulates the menacing plant, and it speaks and sings in the menacing baritone of Ron Taylor. With Lee Wilkof as the apprentice florist who discovers and nurtures it, and Ellen Greene as the lady he loves. (9/27/82) (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Marcel Marceau—The French mime in a limited engagement that opens Wednesday, March 9. (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Opening-night curtain at 6:30; thereafter, Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3. Special performance Sunday, March 13, at 7.)

Merlin—Doug Henning is an excellent illusionist and a sorry musical-comedy star. He should forget the Druids and stick to sawing comely women in two. (2/28/83) (Mark Hellinger, 237 W. 51st St. 757-7064. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Misanthrope—Stephen McHattie plays Alceste, a man bent upon improving human conduct. He finds his only follower to be himself. Also in the cast are Mary Beth Hurt and Carole Shelley. Stephen Porter directed. (2/14/83) (Circle in the Square, Broadway at 50th St. 581-0720. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

On Your Toes—A hit musical of 1936 that deserves to remain a hit, thanks to the music of Richard Rodgers, the lyrics of Lorenz Hart, the choreography of George Balanchine, and the direction by George Abbott, who also helped write the book. This production stars Natalia Makarova and Lara Teeter. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 977-9370. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Plenty—The fascinating heroine of this play by the English dramatist David Hare is a woman who, after her experiences with the

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The New Yorker (ISSN 0028-792X), published weekly by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., 25 W. 43rd St., N.Y., N.Y. 10036; Peter F. Fleischmann, chairman; George J. Green, president; J. Kennard Bosee, vice-president & treasurer; Milton Greenstein, Sam R. Spoto, vice-presidents; Elaine M. Matteo, secretary; Robert F. Young, advertising director. Branch advertising offices: 111 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, Ill. 60601; 155 Montgomery St., San Francisco, Calif. 94104; Suite 2360, 5900 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90036; 1175 Peachtree St. N. E., Atlanta, Ga. 30361; 67½ Chestnut St., Boston, Mass. 02108; 21 Grosvenor St., London, W1X 0ED. Vol. LIX, No. 4, March 14, 1983. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. © 1983 by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., in the United States and Canada. All rights reserved. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without the consent of The New Yorker. Printed in U.S.A. Subscription rates: In U.S. and possessions, one year, $32.00; two years, $52.00. In Canada, one year, $44.00. Other foreign, $52.00. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The New Yorker, 25 W. 43rd St., New York, N.Y. 10036.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

French Resistance during the Second World War, conducts her own private war against every aspect of English life. Most of Mr. Hare's post-John Osborne targets are familiar by now, but his characters and scenes and lines are original and strong, and the performances, under his direction, are first-rate. Kate Nelligan is his driven heroine and Edward Herrmann is her stalwart, victimized husband; among the supporting actors are Ellen Parker, Daniel Gerroll, and George N. Martin. (11/1/82) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, March 27.)

Quartermaine's Terms—The title character of Simon Gray's very funny yet sad comedy is a teacher in a school for foreign students whom loneliness has made even more bubble-brained than God did. Remak Ramsay gives a fine performance in the leading role, and Roy Poole, Caroline Lagerfelt, Anthony Heald, and Dana Ivey are good, too. Kenneth Frankel directed. (3/7/83) (Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

Slab Boys—A comedy about working-class life in a gloomy corner of Scotland in the late fifties. The cast, headed by Kevin Bacon, evinces sufficient high spirits to dispel the gloom. The author is John Byrne. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Playhouse, 359 W. 48th St. 586-7670. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Snoopy—A musical based on Charles M. Schulz's comic strip, "Peanuts." The music is by Larry Grossman, the lyrics by Hal Hackady, and the book by Warren Lockhart, Arthur Whitelaw, and Michael L. Grace. (Lambs Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

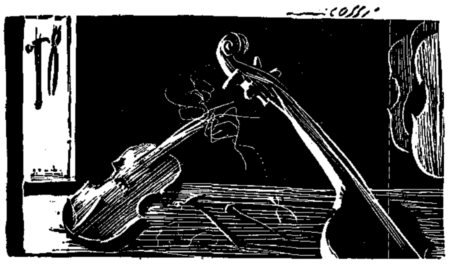
The Tooth of Crime—A revival of Sam Shepard's strong and stunning play about (among many other things) a contest for supremacy between an older man who is trying to hang on and a young punk on his way up. The large band at times drowns out much of the dialogue, and most of the comedy goes by the board as well. Even so, what remains is riveting. The acting is only so-so, but Ray Wise and Jodi Long do quite well. (3/7/83) (La Mama Annex, 66 E. 4th St. 475-7710. Nightly, except Tuesdays, at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, March 20.)

Top Girls—The girls of the title either work in or apply for jobs at a London employment agency, and the principal character, whose career we examine, has just been promoted to top top girl. The play, by the adventurous Caryl Churchill, lacks the high spirits and humor of her larky "Cloud 9," but it has its good points, all the same. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

True West—Sam Shepard's comedy about two rival brothers in California, which was given an unsatisfactory production last season, has now been transformed by the superb clowning of John Malkovich and Gary Sinise, of Chicago. Mr. Sinise was the excellent director. (11/29/82) (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 5.)

A View from the Bridge—A revival, flawlessly cast and directed, of the Arthur Miller melodrama about an Italian longshoreman in Brooklyn who has the bad luck to fall in love with his niece. (2/14/83) (Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Whodunnit—A silly parody of the English murder-mystery genre, written by Anthony Shaffer and enacted by a cast about whom it would be kind to say that all of them have been miscast. (1/18/83) (Biltmore, 261 W. 47th St. 582-5340. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)



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Long Runs—**AGNES OF GOD:** John Pielmeier has written a three-sided discussion of mounting asperity conducted among a Mother Superior, a psychiatrist, and a nun who has given birth to (and perhaps murdered) a child. The cast consists of Elizabeth Ashley, Geraldine Page, and Carrie Fisher. Michael Lindsay-Hogg is the director. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 246-4636. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **AMADEUS:** Peter Shaffer's method as a dramatist is to devise an intricate puzzle and then resolve it, displaying much wit and erudition along the way. The puzzle in this instance is whether Mozart was poisoned by his contemporary, the composer Antonio Salieri, or, no less wickedly, reduced by him to professional failure and poverty. David Dukes plays the villainous Salieri and John Pankow plays Mozart. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **CLOUD 9:** Caryl Churchill's comedy about the "confusion" of sexuality—first in a British outpost in Africa in 1880 and then in a park in London in 1980—is a clever and original work that adds a measure of confusion all its own. It is nimbly performed under Tommy Tune's brilliant direction. (Lucille Lortel Theatre, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE DINING ROOM:** The action of A. R. Gurney, Jr.,'s delightful play takes place in a formal dining room over the past fifty years or so, somewhere in New England, and this action is a matter of brief scenes about a large assortment of characters who are portrayed by six accomplished actors. David Trainer was the good director. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St., near Astor Pl. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **DREAMGIRLS:** Michael Bennett's whizbang and totally synthetic musical about show biz. The breeze is terrific. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **EVITA:** A blithe and calculatedly slapdash rewriting of Argentine history. The songs are easy to listen to, the cast is able, and the staging, by Hal Prince, is up to his usual high standard. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 9,512 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** Pleasantly old-fashioned choreography by the late Gower Champion and a few classic songs enliven an otherwise inert pastiche of the Warner Brothers movie that made Ruby Keeler a star. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 246-0730. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **GENIUSES:** Jonathan Reynolds, a gifted playwright, has written an annoying, campy comedy about some movie people on location near Manila during a typhoon. (Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Wednesday through Friday at 8; Saturday at 7 and 10; and Sunday at 7. Matinée Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, March 13.) . . . **JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT:** A musical derived from the Old Testament story. Andrew Lloyd Webber composed the score and Tim Rice wrote the lyrics. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8:15, and Sundays at 6:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **NINE:** A musical version of Fellini's "8½," with charming music and lyrics by Maury Yeston, a stunning set by Lawrence Miller, and sensationally attractive costumes by William Ivey Long, but the book (by Arthur Kopit) is an embarrassing anti-feminist tract. Raul Julia is the star. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 757-7164. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **PUMP BOYS AND DINETTES:** A thoroughly engaging and spirited little cabaret musical, set in a gas station with diner attached, somewhere in the South. Most of the appealing songs were written by Jim Wann or by his wife, Cass Morgan. (Princess, Broadway at 48th St. 586-3903. Mondays and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **SISTER MARY IGNATIUS EXPLAINS IT ALL FOR YOU** and **THE ACTOR'S NIGHTMARE:** "Sister Ignatius," the second of Christopher Durang's brace of one-acters, is a scathing satire on Catholic education: a crazy nun verbally molests her small pupils until she is given her comeuppance by four visiting alumni. With Nancy Marchand. In the curtain-raiser, "The Actor's Nightmare," a businessman dreams that he is on a stage and forced to perform, giving rise to a cluster of shrewd parodies of respected playwrights. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **TORCH SONG TRILOGY:** Three plays—humorous, sad, sentimental, and witty—by and starring Harvey Fierstein, as a Jewish homosexual hustler and drag queen. Donald Corren substitutes for Mr. Fierstein at the matinée performances. (Little Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **WOMAN OF THE YEAR:** A musical-comedy version of the old Hepburn-Tracy movie. The clever songs are by Kander and Ebb, and the direction is by Robert Moore. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

Forbidden Broadway—A musical satire of Shubert Alley denizens. The lyrics to the song parodies are by Gerard Alessandrini. (Palsson's Upstairs, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8:30; Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 and 11:30; and Sundays at 8:30.)

Martin Charnin's Upstairs at O'Neals'—A lively little revue with a young cast of six, whose ranks may or may not include a future Chita Rivera or Joel Grey. (O'Neals', 147 W. 43rd St. 382-1614. Tuesdays at 8 and 10:30; Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 8 and 10:30; and Saturdays at 7, 9:30, and midnight.)

Bunraku—A ten-performance engagement by the National Puppet Theatre of Japan. (Lila Acheson Wallace Auditorium, Japan House, 333 E. 47th St. 752-3015. Saturday, March 12, at 8; Sunday, March 13, at 2 and 8; Monday through Friday, March 14-18, at 8; and Saturday, March 19, at 2 and 8.)

Candida in Concert—Brian Murray, Barbara Caruso, Dana Ivey, William Denis, Edward

Hibbert, and Bruce Wall in a staged reading of the Shaw play. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Monday, March 14, at 8:15. For tickets, call 477-5832.)

DANCE

Merce Cunningham Dance Company—Opening performances of a two-week engagement that will run through Sunday, March 27—Tuesday, March 15, at 7:30: "Trails," "Locale," and "Gallopade." . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 16, at 8: "Trails," "Quartet" (New York première), and "Locale." . . . ¶ Thursday, March 17, at 8: "Event 1." . . . ¶ Friday, March 18, at 8, and Saturday, March 19, at 2: "Coast Zone" (première), "Channels/Inserts," and "Roadrunners." . . . ¶ Saturday, March 19, at 8: "Trails," "Quartet," and "Locale." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989.)

Hamburg Ballet—Opening performances of a two-week engagement by this company from Germany—Tuesday, March 15, at 7, and Saturday, March 19, at 2 and 8: "A Midsummer Night's Dream." . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 16, at 7, and Thursday, March 17, at 8: "Legend of Joseph" (with guest artist Judith Jamison), "Vaslav," and "Bach Suite No. 2." . . . ¶ Friday, March 18, at 8: "Mahler's Third Symphony." (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100.)

Annabelle Gamson, Phyllis Lamhut, and Don Redlich—A one-week joint engagement—Program I: Wednesday, March 16, at 7; Friday, March 18, at 8; Saturday, March 19, at 2; and Sunday, March 20, at 8. . . . ¶ Program II: Thursday, March 17, and Saturday, March 19, at 8, and Sunday, March 20, at 2. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Avenue, at 19th St. 242-0800.)

Les Ballets Trocadero de la Karpova—Performances of "The Firebird" and other ballets. (18th St. Playhouse, 145 W. 18th St. 929-7907. Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, and Friday and Saturday, March 18-19, at 11. Closes Wednesday, March 23.)

Riverside Dance Festival—Performances by two companies. **OHAD NAHARIN & DANCERS:** Wednesday, March 9, and Friday, March 11, at 8, and Sunday, March 13, at 2. . . . **TOMOV YUGOSLAV FOLKDANCE ENSEMBLE:** Wednesday, March 16, and Friday, March 18, at 8, and Saturday and Sunday, March 19-20, at 2. (Theatre of the Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. 864-2929.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Angry Squire, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—Jazz in a lively Chelsea bar and restaurant bedecked with nautical stuff. Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, will belong to pianist **WALTER BISHOP, JR.,** and bassist **CLINT HOUSTON,** and Friday and Saturday, March 18-19, to pianist **HUGH LAWSON** and bassist **CALVIN HILL.** Sets at ten, eleven-thirty, and one.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A dark, large, carpeted club, with deep-blue tablecloths and a curvy bar. **JUNIOR MANCE** and **MARTY RIVERA** are at their posts—piano and bass, respectively—until Thursday, March 10; on Friday, March 11, the thirty-year-old **MODERN JAZZ QUARTET** will begin a nine-day visit (they'll be here every night but Monday, through Sunday, March 20). On Monday, March 14, trombonist Angel Rangelov and drummer Jimmy Madison will co-pilot their big band, which will feature a guest soloist, baritone saxophonist **PEPPER ADAMS.** There are usually three sets, beginning at nine-thirty.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—The lineup: Wednesday, March 9, Tower of Power; Thursday, March 10, Firefall and Luke Fredricks; Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, **BETTY CARTER,** the risk-taking jazz singer, and her trio, and the multinational, multi-instrumental **DAVID AMRAM** quintet; Wednesday and Thursday, March 16-17, Bryan Adams; Friday and Saturday, March 18-19, vibraharpist **GARY BURTON'S** quartet and tenor saxophonist **DEWEY REDMAN'S** quartet. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and midnight. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A sophisticated New York bar; it has dark wood panelling, driven conversationalists, and some good musicians. **JOANNE BRACKEEN** is at the piano and **CECIL MC BEE** is at his magical bass through Saturday, March 12; on Monday, March 14, **RED MITCHELL** will return to perform bass solos and support pianist **LEE ANN LEDGERWOOD.** Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Broadway Joe's, 315 W. 46th St., near Eighth Ave. (246-6513)—Pianist **JIMMY LYON,** who works until ten at the Waldorf on a sumptuous Louis XVI Steinway that belonged to Cole Porter, performs after ten-thirty in this theatre-district bar and restaurant at a teeny, white trail-size Kawai that sounds pretty darn good. Mr. Lyon can be heard on Fridays and Saturdays. Singer-pianist **BOB DOROUGH** can be heard here on Wednesdays and Thursdays from nine to two.

Café Pierre, in the Pierre Hotel, Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (838-8000)—**BUCKY PIZZARELLI** plays fervent jazz disguised as hotel music Tuesdays through Saturdays from nine to one. Dining and dancing.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle is now presenting **BARBARA COOK,** who sings in a clear, ringing soprano. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at ten and midnight. Dining. . . . **BARBARA CARROLL** is at work at the keyboard in the Bemelmans Bar nightly, except Sundays, from nine.

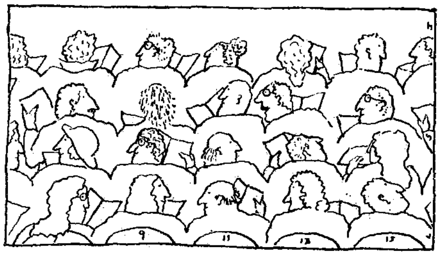
Carnegie Tavern, 165 W. 56th St. (757-9522)—**ELLIS LARKINS** can be found in this dark-brown restaurant in back of Carnegie Hall. His delicate, elegant piano solos, performed before hushed, attentive audiences, are encased, at times, in very short sets. Nightly, except Sundays, from nine to midnight.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Exposed rafters, weathered, splintery wood posts, decrepit neon beer signs, and a general ramshackle feel. All this and rock and roll, too: Wednesday, March 9, Sex in Miami, the Convairs, and Not Heaven; Thursday, March 10, Dragons, Positron, and Exhibit A; Friday, March 11, Helen Wheels Band, Hoy Boy & the Doys, and Sussman Lawrence; and Saturday, March 12, Paul Collins Beat, Chris Moffa & the Competition, and the Grownups. Shows nightly from long after nine-thirty.

Cookery, 21 University Pl., at 8th St. (674-4450)—**OSCAR BRAND,** a veteran folk strummer and singer of "bawdy," seagoing, and terra-firma songs, is here Tuesdays through Saturdays. On Sundays and Mondays, **CARRIE SMITH,** a strong and compelling blues and jazz singer, can be heard. Shows begin at nine-fifteen and eleven. Dining.

Eagle Tavern, 355 W. 14th St., at Ninth Ave. (924-0275)—Plaid-flannel-shirt heaven. In spite of all the harpoons, ships' figureheads, and mounted fish hanging on the walls, you might swear you were in the hills somewhere, because of the lively bluegrass, folk, and old-time country music that is presented every week. Wednesday, March 9, members of the Tara Ceili Band; Thursday, March 10, Scott Ainslie and Hank Sapoznick; Saturday, March 12, Jay Ungar & Lyn Hardy, with Molly Mason; Wednesday, March 16, Joe and Antoinette McKenna; Thursday, March 17, Kincora, Gina McMather & Matthew Amson, and Tom MacKenzie; and Saturday, March 19, the Back Roads Bluegrass Band. Music from eight-thirty on Wednesdays, from eight-fifteen on Thursdays, and from nine on Saturdays.

Eddie Condon's, 144 W. 54th St. (265-8277)—The tradition-minded house sextet goes to work at eight-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays, and on Wednesdays the Bill Simon–George Simon quintet is here from five-thirty to eight-thirty. On Sunday, March 13, the **JOHN BUNCH** quintet will be present from about nine-fifteen, and on Monday, March 14, Jack Maheu will lead a quintet. Dining.



Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Tenor saxophonists **CLIFFORD JORDAN** and **BUCK HILL** share a quartet through Sunday, March 13; on Tuesday, March 15, two original Kansas City chiefs—**JAY MC SHANN,** pianist, singer, and big-band leader, and **BIG JOE TURNER,** blues and R. & B. singer—will take over. The first set begins at nine. Dining. Closed Mondays.

Folk City, 130 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (254-8449)—Folkie City, that is: Wednesday, March 9, the Minutemen and Red Dark Sweet; Thursday, March 10, Soviet Sex and False Prophets; Friday, March 11, singer-songwriter **MICHAEL HURLEY;** Saturday, March 12, Celtic Thunder; Wednesday, March 16, Mofungo and the Mudmen; Thursday, March 17, Touchstone, featuring Triona Ní Dhomhnaill (at eight and eleven); Friday, March 18, **JACK ELLIOTT,** the Verrazano Narrows singing cowboy; and Saturday, March 19, folk rockers **MARY MC CASLIN** and **JIM RINGER.** Two shows—the first one usually getting under way about nine—every night but Wednesday, when the music starts at ten, and Monday, which is hootenanny night and begins about eight.

Greene Street, 101 Greene St., near Prince St. (925-2415)—In practically any other part of town, turning a truck warehouse—which is what Greene Street was—into a night club might be called visionary, but in SoHo it's just good business. The live music: Wednesday, March 9, pianist **HILTON RUIZ;** Thursday through Saturday, March 10-12, pianist and singer **AMINA CLAUDINE MYERS** and bassist **DON PATE;** Sunday through Wednesday, March 13-16, pianist **JOANNE BRACKEEN;** and Thursday through Saturday, March 17-19, singer Marion Cowings. Music Sundays through Thursdays at eight-thirty, ten, and eleven-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine, eleven, and one. Dining.

Gregory's, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—Guitarist Jack Fragomeni's trio performs through Sunday, March 13; on Monday, March 14, Janet Lawson will sing with her backup crew; and Wednesday through Sunday guitarist Fred Fried, pianist Judd Woldin, and bassist John Belzaguy will team up. On Tuesdays, **CHUCK WAYNE,** whose guitar solos are still bebop fast, leads a trio. All these groups begin at about ten. Sundays from five to ten belong to pianist **BROOKS KERR,** and Loumell Morgan plays piano the same hours Mondays through Fridays.

Griff's, Third Ave., at 37th St. (867-7179)—A very pleasant restaurant in one of those spare high-rise apartment houses. Pianist Esther Blue performs with her trio through Saturday, March 12, and on Tuesday, March 15, Jim Roberts and Brian Torff will begin a week of piano-bass duets. The Sunday-and-Monday slot usually belongs to singer-pianist **NINA SHELDON** and her bassist. Sets begin at nine Tuesdays through Saturdays and at seven on Sundays and Mondays.

Hanratty's, 1754 Second Ave., at 91st St. (289-3200)—The East Side twin—it's actually a little fancier—of a West Side hangout. This one attracts neatly dressed couples and hires jazz pianists. (The other attracts some of the West Side literati and plugs in a jukebox.) Trumpeter **DICK SUDHALTER** works with pianist **STEVE KUHN** through Saturday, March 12, and with pianist **MIKE RENZI** starting Tuesday, March 15. Sunday and Monday, March 13-14, will be claimed by piano-rag soloist Terry Waldo. Music Sundays through Thursdays from eight-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays from nine.

Jazzmania Society, 40 W. 27th St. (532-7666)—The schedule at this convivial jazz loft: Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, Frequency, a Brazilian dance band, and Friday and Saturday, March 18-19, Janet Grice & Tropicale. Sets at eight-thirty, ten, and eleven-thirty.

Jimmy Ryan's, 154 W. 54th St. (664-9700)—Five resident Dixieland journeymen swing it

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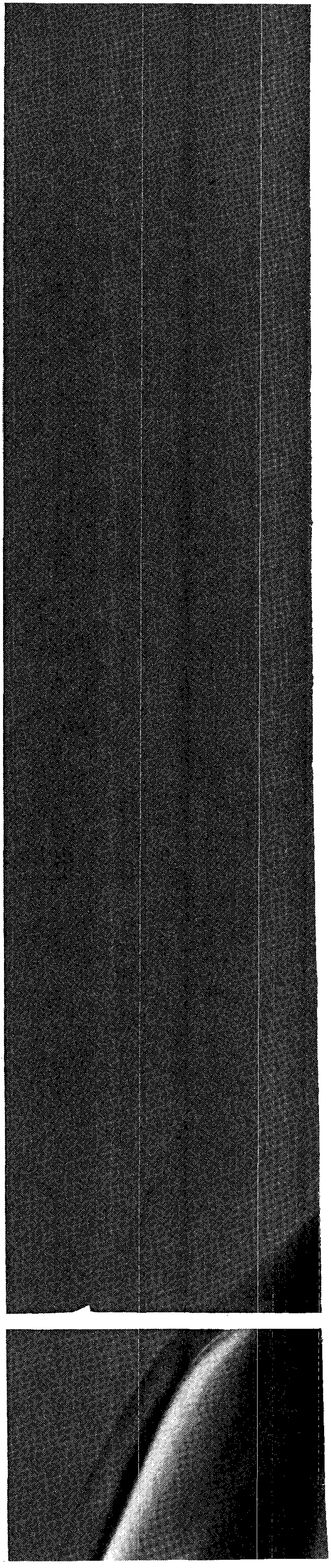

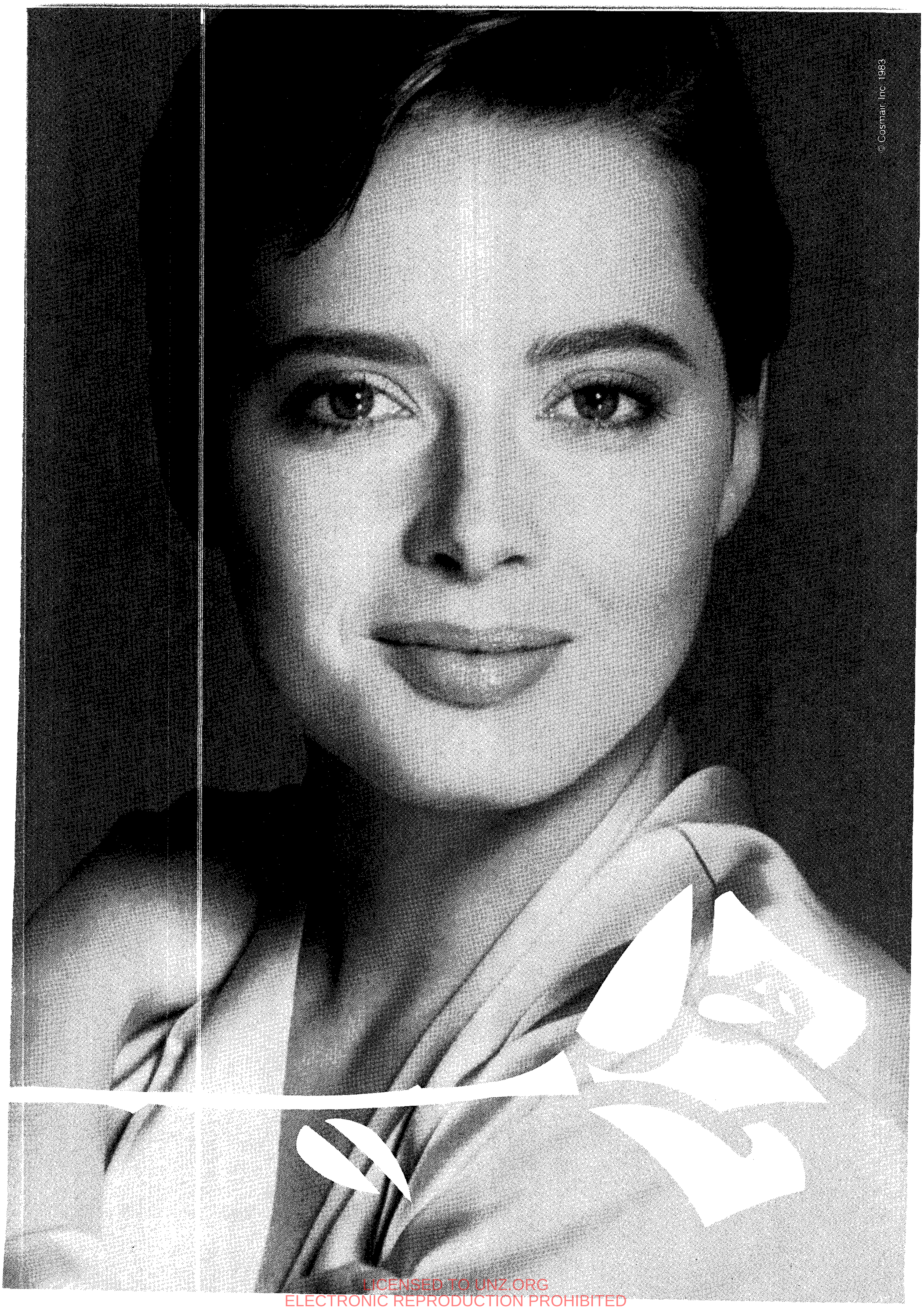

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under the leadership of trumpeter Spanky Davis. On Mondays, trumpeter **MAX KAMINSKY** leads them. Music weeknights from nine-thirty to three. On Sundays, Kaminsky directs another group of musical archivists from eight until two.

Knickerbocker Saloon, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A bustling corner bar and restaurant that is often crowded—but, fortunately, crowded with good listeners. They're listening to real fine duos: Super bassist **RON CARTER** and pianist **CEDAR WALTON** through Saturday, March 12, and pianist **FRED HERSCH** and bassist **BUSTER WILLIAMS** beginning Tuesday, March 15. **JUNIOR MANCE** and **MARTY RIVERA** are the Sunday and Monday players. Music from about ten.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—No, this isn't the Department of Rockabilly at the New School. It's a degentrified Schrafft's, where the authentic Texas ambience is more representative of Austin than of Dallas. Wednesday, March 9, drummer and singer and actor **LEVON HELM** and bassist and singer **RICK DANKO;** Thursday, March 10, the Aztec Two-Step; Sunday, March 13, the Whites and Willy & the Poor Boys; Monday, March 14, guitarist **LARRY CORYELL;** and Thursday, March 17, **COMMANDER CODY.** Music from about eight-thirty nightly. Dining.

Lush Life, 184 Thompson St., at Bleecker St. (228-3788)—A real fine lineup, as usual: Vibraharpist **BOBBY HUTCHERSON** heads up a quintet through Sunday, March 13; Tuesday, March 15, will belong to Hal McKusic; and on Wednesday, March 16, tenor saxophonist **DAVID MURRAY** will bring in his quartet. Sets begin at nine-thirty, eleven-thirty, and one Sundays through Thursdays, and at nine-thirty, midnight, and two Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Mondays.

Marty's, 1265 Third Ave., at 73rd St. (249-4100)—**CARMEN MC RAE** is singing here Mondays through Thursdays at nine and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at ten and midnight. Dining.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2282)—A show called "Julius La Rosa Sings the Dream Lyrics of Oscar Hammerstein" is running Tuesdays through Saturdays from nine-fifteen. Mondays from nine to midnight are claimed by the New Orleans Funeral and Ragtime Band. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A well-attended, well-run upper West Side night club that brings in satisfying jazz, rhythm-and-blues, and funk bands. The lineup: Wednesday, March 9, Giant Steps; Thursday, March 10, Joe Cool; Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, French Toast; Monday, March 14, Inner Sections; Tuesday, March 15, the Sam Burtis big band; Wednesday, March 16, Billy Scott; Thursday, March 17, Henry T. Mitchell; and Friday and Saturday, March 18-19, a tribute to trumpeter Mike Lawrence. Music from ten until two. Dining.

Other End, 149 Bleecker St. (673-7030)—A small, famous, formerly just-folkies club, but now there is jazz, and large helpings of rock. The current roster: Wednesday, March 9, Art Halperin; Thursday, March 10, the **ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SOUL;** Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, blues and jazz singer **ETTA JAMES** with George Dickel on Friday, and with the White Boys on Saturday; Wednesday, March 16, Dana & the Tribe, which will feature flutist **JEREMY STEIG;** Thursday, March 17, the Strangers; and Friday and Saturday, March 18-19, the sublime R. & B. sextet **STUFF.** Shows begin at nine-thirty and midnight. On Sundays after ten, the place is given over to a jazz-rock jam session. Mondays, a talent showcase begins at eight. Dining and dancing.

Peacock Alley, in the Waldorf-Astoria, Park Ave. at 49th St. (355-3000)—**JIMMY LYON** is playing piano in this quiet room, which functions as a sort of passageway connecting the hotel lobby with a dining room. Mr. Lyon, who has accompanied Mabel Mercer throughout the past decade, has a touch that seems magically smooth and cushioned, and his timing is unassailable. He's on hand Tuesdays through Saturdays from six to ten.

Rainbow Room, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (757-9090)—An Art Deco playroom on the sixty-fifth floor. **PANAMA FRANCIS,** the jazz and rock-and-roll drummer, leads an infectiously rhythmic small band through some highly suitable Lindy music until Sunday, March 13; on Tuesday, March 15, trumpeter and arranger **SY OLIVER** will return with his bouncy dance septet. Music Tuesdays through Thursdays from seven to one, Fridays and Saturdays from eight to two, and Sundays from six to midnight. Dining.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			9	10	11	12
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Red Blazer Too, 1576 Third Ave., at 88th St. (876-0440)—A large, busy establishment that has a slightly touristy feel to it. Traditional jazz is presented from about nine every night but Sunday, when it begins at seven. Dining.

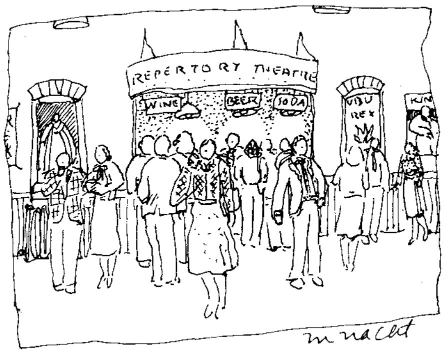
Ritz, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Rock and roll in more Art Deco—in this case, a very large ballroom: the dance floor measures forty by fifty feet. What the place loses in intimacy it makes up in occasional big names. Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, the Thompson Twins; Tuesday, March 15, the Meeting; Friday, March 18, Tin Tin; and Saturday and Sunday, March 19-20, **LENE LOVICH,** the rock-and-roll singer whose simultaneously off-putting and captivating voice is reedy and pliant—almost like a vibrato-heavy tenor saxophone. Shows usually begin after midnight. Closed Sundays.

Seventh Avenue South, 21 Seventh Ave. S., at Leroy St. (242-4694)—Jazz and jazz-rock on the second floor. The players: Wednesday, March 9, Susan Winder; Thursday, March 10, Thom Rotella; Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, **CISSY HOUSTON,** a positively uplifting soul and gospel-based singer; Sunday, March 13, guitarist **BARRY FINNERTY;** Tuesday, March 15, Rock Wilk; Wednesday, March 16, singer Carmen Lundy; Thursday, March 17, **THIAGO DE MELLO** and his ten-piece Brazilian-jazz band, **AMAZON;** and Friday and Saturday, March 18-19, Joe Cool. Music from nine-thirty.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Sambas and other musical sounds from Rio, Bahia, Salvador, and the jungle. Wednesday and Thursday, March 9-10, **JORGE DALTO** and **POTATO VALDEZ;** Wednesday, March 16, **CLIFFORD JORDAN;** Thursday, March 17, the Samba Spaceship Band, with Don Yuarez Benedicto; Fridays and Saturdays, **PÉ-DE-BOI;** Sundays, the Clarice Taylor trio; and Tuesdays, Marcos Silva. Music from ten. Dining. Closed Mondays.

Star and Garter, 105 W. 13th St., near Sixth Ave. (242-3166)—Solid weekend jazz: Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, the **DAVE HOPKINS** trio will be on hand, and on Friday and Saturday, March 18-19, the great **TEDDY WILSON** will play piano, accompanied by his son, **THEODORE WILSON,** on bass. Music from ten. Dining.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—This knotty-pine night club keeps bringing in proven jazz players and the place keeps on being crowded. Trumpeter **JOHNNY COLES** has gathered together **JUNIOR COOK, CHARLES DAVIS, BUSTER WILLIAMS, STANLEY COWELL,** and **ALAN NELSON** to gig with through Saturday, March 12; Sunday and Monday, March 13-14, will be claimed by trumpeter **AHMED ABDULLAH** and his very fine up-to-date quintet; and on Tuesday, March 15, the **NEW YORK JAZZ QUARTET** will begin performing some worthwhile New York jazz. Shows from about ten. Dining.



Trax, 100 W. 72nd St., near Columbus Ave. (799-1448)—Rock and roll on the upper West Side. Wednesday, March 9, Jessie & the Whiz Kids and Peter Bliss; Thursday, March 10, Bush Rock and the Rhythm Method; Friday, March 11, Bob Duncan; Saturday, March 12, Urgent and Knucklehead Smith; and Monday, March 14, Jack of Diamonds. Music after eleven. Dancing. Closed Sundays.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—On Monday, March 14, it's salsa night in the downstairs room with **LUIS (PERICO) ORTIZ, CHARANGA CASINO,** and guest soloist trumpeter **CLAUDIO RODITI.** On Tuesdays, out on the Terrace, jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN** and her trio are on duty after nine.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Perhaps the most famous basement in the world. Alto saxophonist **PAQUITO D'RIVERA** leads his flamboyant, macho, Latin-jazz quintet through Sunday, March 13; on Tuesday, March 15, altoist **PHIL WOODS** will bring in his quartet. Mondays are now the property of **FRANK FOSTER'S BIG BAND.** Music from ten.

Village West, 577 Hudson St., near Bank St. (691-2791)—A nice bar with tile floors, a pressed-tin ceiling, a bandstand bounded by a brass rail, and a hairpin turn (which leads to the dining room). **RED MITCHELL,** the fine bassist, is playing piano this time, with his own supporting bassist, through Sunday, March 13, and on Tuesday, March 15, the delightful singers **JACKIE CAIN** and **ROY KRAL—JACKIE & ROY** to their admirers—will move in. Music at nine and eleven Sundays and Tuesdays through Thursdays, and at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. No music Mondays.

West Boondock, 114 Tenth Ave., at 17th St. (929-9645)—A surprising number of people know about this cozy little place situated just north of scores of meat-packing plants and truck docks—the live-in lofts of tomorrow. Pianist Esther Blue can be heard Mondays through Wednesdays; Kuni Mikami has the Thursday-through-Sunday shift. Music begins at eight-thirty. Dining.

West End, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—A loose and informal Columbia University neighborhood hangout for swing-music admirers and players. The schedule: guitarist Mike Peters' hot-jazz band through Saturday, March 12; guitarist **CHRIS FLORY** on Monday, March 14; and saxophonist Don Lamphere starting Tuesday, March 15. Sundays are soaring-alto-sax-solo nights with **LEE KONITZ.** Music from nine.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—In the twenties, there was a speakeasy at this address; in the seventies, Reno Sweeney. Now the premises have been turned into a SoHo-sleek and spacious bar and restaurant, with a musical passageway between them. The piano-bass roster: **BROSS TOWNSEND** and **BOB CUNNINGHAM** through Saturday, March 12; **RONNIE MATHEWS** and his bassist starting Monday, March 14; and **JOHN BUNCH** and **PHIL FLANIGAN** every Sunday. Music Mondays through Saturdays from nine, and Sundays from eight-thirty.

JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

Bette Midler—Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 246-4600. Wednesday, March 9, and Friday through Monday, March 11-14, all at 8.

Angela Bofill—Savoy, 141 W. 44th St. Thursday, March 10, at 8; Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, at 8 and 11; and Sunday, March 13, at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 977-9020.

Kate & Anna McGarrigle and Leo Kottke—Carnegie Hall. 247-7459. Friday, March 11, at 8.

Clancy Brothers—Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Friday, March 11, at 8.

WNYC Folk Song Festival—With Oscar Brand and others. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Friday, March 11, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

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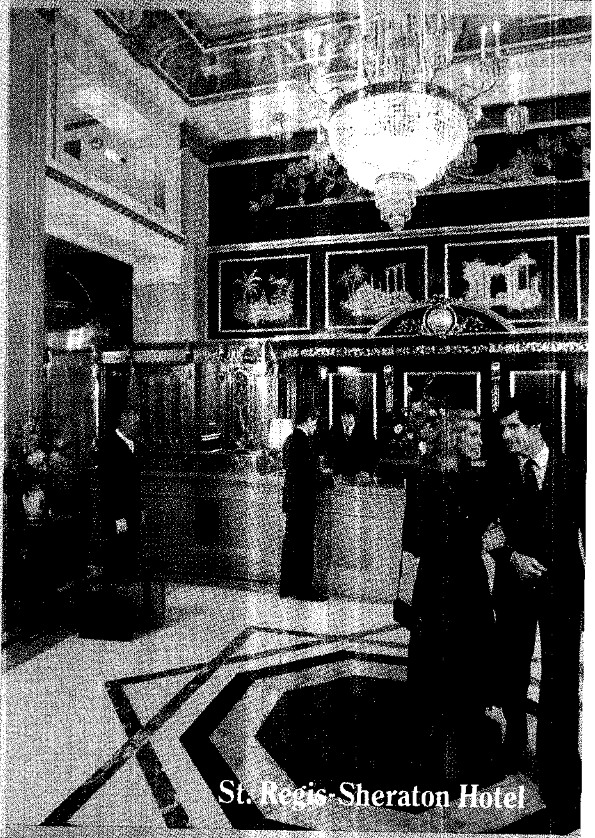

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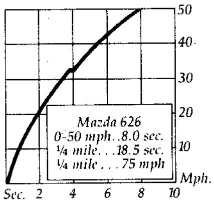

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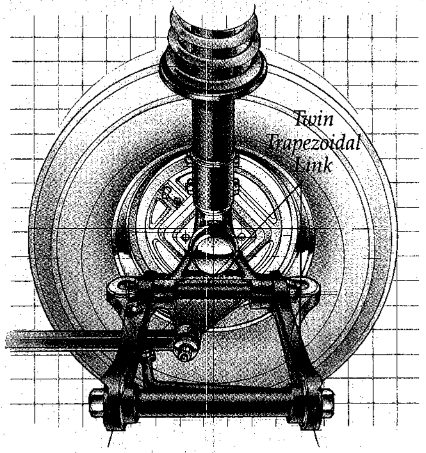

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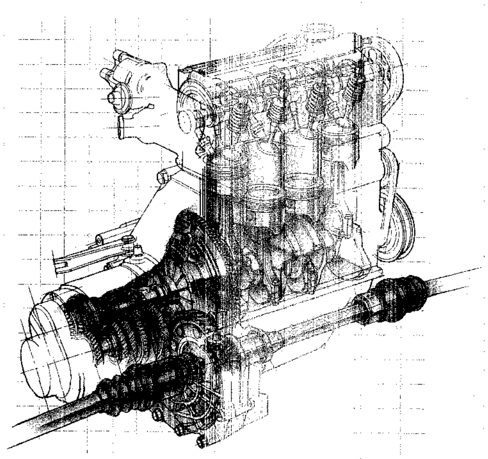

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

—Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. Saturday, March 12, at 8. For information about tickets, call 687-9000.

Sam Wooding—With Rae Harrison. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Sunday, March 13, at 2:30. For tickets, call 722-8223.)

Charles Aznavour—Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 575-9200. Monday, March 14, through Saturday, April 2. Opening-night curtain at 7; thereafter, Mondays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10.

Kirk Nurock—With Harvie Swartz and Jon DeRobertis. (Carnegie Recital Hall. 247-7459. Wednesday, March 16, at 8.)

Highlights in Jazz—Billy Taylor, Jimmy Heath, Slide Hampton, Ray Barretto, and others. (Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. 598-3757. Thursday, March 17, at 8.)

Teresa Trull and Deuce—Town Hall. Friday, March 18, at 8.

David Bargeron and Howard Johnson—New School, 66 W. 12th St. Friday, March 18, at 6. Tickets at the door on the evening of the performance.

David (Honeyboy) Edwards—Alternative Museum, 17 White St., three blocks south of Canal St., at Sixth Ave. 966-4444. Friday, March 18, at 8.

Weather Report—Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 874-1717. Saturday, March 19, at 8.

Jazz Forum—Jazz in a fifth-floor loft. World Bass Festival—Wednesday, March 9, at ten and midnight: Brian Smith & the World Bass Violin Ensemble. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 10, at 10, 11:30, and 1: Harvie Swartz String Ensemble. . . . ¶ Friday, March 11, at 10, 11:30, and 1: Yoshio (Chin) Suzuki quintet. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 12, at 10, 11:30, and 1: Rufus Reid & Expedition. . . . ¶ Sunday, March 13, at 10 and midnight: Lisle Atkinson quartet. . . . ¶ Monday, March 14, at ten and midnight: Ron McClure quartet. . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 16, at 10 and midnight: Curtis Lundy quintet. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 17, at 10, 11:30, and 1: Milt Hinton, Derek Smith, and Bobby Rosengarden. . . . ¶ Friday, March 18, at 10, 11:30, and 1: Art Davis quartet. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 19, at 10, 11:30, and 1: Eddie Gomez & Jeremy Steig and Reggie Workman & Top Shelf. (Jazz Forum, 648 Broadway, at Bleecker St. 477-2655.)

Jazz Interviews—Sylvia Syms (with pianist Michael Abene), being interviewed by John Gruen. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. Monday, March 14, at 8. Tickets at the box office one hour before the interview.)

ART

(Unless *otherwise noted, galleries are open* Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Eloy Blanco—A show covering thirty years, ranging from a painting of a Puerto Rican newly arrived in New York (1955) to recent solid-color canvases crowded with literally thousands of tiny stick figures. Through May 27. (El Museo del Barrio, 1230 Fifth Ave., at 104th St. Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 4:30; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 4.)

Richard Bogart—Landscape paintings of the Connecticut countryside by an Impressionist. Through March 31. (Poindexter, 1160 Fifth Ave., at 97th St. Closed Tuesdays.)

Dan Christensen / Alvaro Guevara (1874-1951) **and Meraud Guevara**—Color-field paintings. / Paintings by both artists. Through March 26. (Salander-O'Reilly, 22 E. 80th St.)

Klaus Fussmann—Loosely executed paintings of interiors and landscapes (some with figures), and still-lifes. Through Saturday, March 19. (Lefebre, 47 E. 77th St.)

Igor Galanin—Fantasy paintings. Through April 2. (Aberbach, 988 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

Joseph Glasco—Recent paintings: large canvases in black and white, and a number of eight-foot high canvas-collage screens. Through March 26. (Gimpel, 1040 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

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Lois Lane—Large paintings in which familiar subjects—a domino mask, a calf, an angel—are treated somewhat abstractly. Through Wednesday, March 16. (Willard, 29 E. 72nd St.)

Leo Lionni—Meticulously executed pencil drawings of botanical forms and rock formations. Through Saturday, March 12. (Staempfli, 47 E. 77th St.)

Herman Maril—New paintings of the land and sea evoked in simple lines and blocks of color. Also still-lifes. Through March 26. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Joan Mitchell—Huge abstract paintings offering a profusion of springlike colors. Through March 26. (Fourcade, 36 E. 75th St.)

Jean-Pierre Péricaud—Abstract acrylic paintings in which a few broad swipes of bright color are laid onto a two-tone background. Through Wednesday, March 16. (Elkon, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

Edward Seager (1809-86)—Careful renditions in pencil of scenic spots ranging from Panama to New Hampshire, by an artist who taught drawing at the United States Naval Academy. Through Wednesday, March 16. (Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St.)

Maurice Sievan (1898-1981)—Figurative paintings, most of them spectral, misty forms, done in the fifties and sixties. Through April 2. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St.)

Sylvia Sleigh—Portraits—both formal and informal—of Lawrence Alloway (sometimes in the company of Betty Parsons or with Scott Burton) from the past thirty years. Through March 26. (Einstein, 243 E. 82nd St.)

Joseph Solman—A two-gallery exhibit of works from the thirties: Paintings in oil, at the ACA, 21 E. 67th St., and gouaches at A. M. Adler, located at the same address. Through March 26.

Alan Uglow—Severely restrained Minimalist paintings and drawings from the past three years. Through March 26. (Siegel, 29 E. 73rd St.)

Herk Van Tongeren—Elegant sculptured wall pieces in bronze, involving geometric forms and fluted columns. Through Saturday, March 12. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 417 E. 75th St.)

Group Shows—At the **KNOWLTON**, 19 E. 71st St.: Figurative paintings by veteran Expressionists include a de Kooning (plus several of his drawings), an Alice Neel, and a comic Europa by Red Grooms. Through March 26. (Opens at noon on Saturdays.) . . . **SAIDENBERG**, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.: A score of paintings and works on paper by Bauhaus associate Herbert Bayer and a scattering of works by other members of that period, among them Kandinsky, Klee, and Schwitters. Through April 15. (Opens at 1 on Saturdays.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Jerry Atkins—Frogs, baboons, and other animals, as well as people, are reduced to their fundamental forms in these sculptures, done in bronze or polymer resin. Through Saturday, March 12. (Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Barton Lidicé Beneš—Assemblages using international paper currency to make visual jokes—a stroke of gold paint issues from a paintbrush wrapped in dollar bills, red paint from one in rubles, and so on. Through April 2. (Markel, 50 W. 57th St.)

Carol Brown—Small colored-pencil drawings of brilliantly hued desert scenery—wind-carved rocks and cactus formations. Through March 26. (Witkin, 41 E. 57th St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Edith Carlson / Joshua Schreier—Color-field drawings in pencil. / Nonobjective drawings in oil stick on paper. Through Saturday, March 19. (Hadler-Rodriguez, 38 E. 57th St.)

Chuck Close / David von Schlegell—New portraits in a variety of mediums: Watercolors, fingerprint drawings done with stamp-pad ink, and collages made with paper-pulp chips. / Very large abstract sculptures made of rough-cut mahogany timbers pegged together. Through March 26. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Charles Clough—Expressionist works by an artist who applies enamel to reproductions of Old Master paintings with his fingertips and then takes enlarged photographs of the results, which he either works into collages or starts painting on all over again. Through March 26. (Pam Adler, 37 W. 57th St.)

Marcia Dalby—A hundred-odd lighthearted sculptures of farm animals and implements, made of chicken wire covered with cheesecloth and acrylic, by a twenty-five-year-old artist. Through April 2. (Wolf, a gallery mostly known for photography shows, at 30 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Erté—His work is at three galleries: Dyansen 57, a new gallery branch at 11 E. 57th St. Through Tuesday, March 15. (Open Mondays.) . . . ¶ Dyansen, 122 Spring St. Through Sunday, March 13. . . . ¶ Fashion Institute of Technology, Seventh Ave. at 27th St. Through March 26. (Open Tuesday evenings until 9.)

Mary Frank—New works, including her familiar ceramic sculptures and a large series of monotypes, plus two five-foot figures put together with lakeside driftwood and partially coated with plaster. Through Saturday, March 19. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Jane Freilicher—Oils showing broad landscape views from the windows of the artist's home in Water Mill, Long Island, and cityscapes from her studio windows in town. Through April 6. (Fischbach, 29 W. 57th St.)

Lorrie Goulet—Figure sculptures in peach alabaster, Pyrenees marble, green serpentine stone, white Vermont marble, and wood. Through March 26. (Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St.)

Red Grooms and Peter Saul—Works from the early sixties by these two artists, including paintings of New York and Italy by the former, and paintings inspired by the movie "Psycho" by the latter. Through March 25. (Frumkin, 50 W. 57th St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Susan Hall—New paintings employing this artist's familiar images (among them trains and ships seen in the moonlight), but altered this time by heavily drawn lines of black oil stick. Through March 26. (Hamilton, 20 W. 57th St.)

Theo Hios—Landscapes of Greece in acrylics on canvas. Through Saturday, March 19. (Summit, 101 W. 57th St. Opens at 11:30.)

Richard Hunt—Drawings on copper plates and in craypas and prints by an artist known primarily as a sculptor. Through March 24. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

John Stuart Ingle—Large-scale watercolor still-lifes and interiors that have a Photo-Realist exactitude without the glare. Through March 31. (Tatistcheff, 38 E. 57th St.)

Wolf Kahn—Landscape paintings and pastels by a veteran colorist. Through April 2. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Alex Katz—Paintings of John and Rollins, Julia and Alexandra, Ada and Alex (the latter Katz himself), and so on. Through April 2. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Harry Koursaros—Recent paintings with recurring floral, mythological, and allegorical motifs. Through April 2. (Haber Theodore, 29 W. 57th St.)

George McNeil—Wild-looking figures painted

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

in a vivid Expressionist style by this veteran painter, now in his mid-seventies. Through Saturday, March 12. (Gruenebaum, 38 E. 57th St.)

Robert Moskowitz—Big, dark paintings and drawings of imposing subjects—a windmill, for instance, the Flatiron Building, the silhouette of Rodin's "The Thinker." Through Saturday, March 19. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Kenneth Noland—Acrylic canvases in polygonal shapes. Through April 2. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Judy Rifka—The Berlin Wall, classical architecture, and modern dance are among the themes touched on in an exhibition of paintings and set pieces by this new artist. Through Saturday, March 12. (Alexander, 20 W. 57th St.)

Jon Schueler—Abstractions in oils. Through March 31. (Sachs, 29 W. 57th St.)

Todd Stone—Abstract paintings and a huge, semi-abstract work inspired by the altar of the Ghent cathedral. Through March 22. (Arras, 29 W. 57th St.)

Paul Thek—Paintings on newspaper in acrylic; some have their titles painted right on them. Through Saturday, March 19. (Iolas-Jackson, 52 E. 57th St.)

Riduan Tomkins—Paintings in which rich color-field areas make up the walls of vast interiors where a single small figure occurs—usually a nude, but sometimes a cow or a crocodile or a flamingo. Through Wednesday, March 16. (Parsons, 24 W. 57th St.)

Stephen Woodburn—Big realistic paintings of imaginary places, mostly rocky, weatherbeaten mountaintops. Through March 26. (Alex Rosenberg, 20 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Group Shows—At the **aaron berman,** 50 W. 57th St.: Abe Ajay, Elisabeth Munro Smith, and Sylvia Wald are among the dozen artists showing painted constructions and wall reliefs. Through March 26. . . . **galerie st. etienne,** 24 W. 57th St.: Twentieth-century folk painters: Grandma Moses, Nan Phelps, Israel Litwak, Abraham Levin, and others. Through Saturday, March 12.

GALLERIES—SoHo

Marjorie Abramson—A ceramic wall piece entitled "Truffle" and depicting a split mushroom is typical of this artist's new sculptures. Through Wednesday, March 16. (SoHo 20, at 469 Broome St. Opens at noon.)

Carl Andre / Peter Campus—Diamond-shaped plastic honeycombs, one red, one blue, one yellow, and one white, laid out like rugs in corners of the gallery, are a memorial to the sculptor's friend Eva Hesse. Through March 26. / Silverprints. Through April 2. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Richard Artschwager—Grisaille paintings executed between 1964 and 1981. Through March 26. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

James Buchman—Sculptural works in which large slivers of rough granite are set into rust-brown frameworks of Corten steel. Through March 26. (Hutchinson, 138 Greene St.)

Dickson Carroll—Zany carpentered-wood architectural sculptures. Through March 24. (Westbroadway, 431 West Broadway.)

Arthur Cohen—Paintings and etchings of New York and Provincetown. Through March 23. (Blue Mountain, 121 Wooster St. Opens daily, except Mondays, at noon.)

Enzo Cucchi—New paintings and drawings. Through March 30. (Sperone Westwater Fischer, 142 Greene St.)

Nassos Daphnis / Sandy Skoglund—Paintings. / An installation consisting of epoxy-and-resin figures symbolizing, according to the artist, babies as an "evil presence of mankind on earth," together with two tons of black sand, a house façade, and a huge photograph. Through March 26. (Castelli, 420 West Broadway.)

Joan Gardner / Marilyn Giersbach—Paintings. / Abstract paintings. Through Saturday, March 19. (55 Mercer Street Gallery.)

Sidney Geist—Sculptures in terra-cotta, bronze, or aluminum, including a terra-cotta head based on a face the artist detected in the background of a Cézanne landscape. Through Saturday, March 12. (Ingber, 460 West Broadway.)

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Duncan Hannah—Realist paintings of Grecian hillsides (with goats and ruined temples), trains winding through Alpine passes, Dutch canals, figures. Through Saturday, March 12. (Semaphore, 462 West Broadway.)

Douglas Huebler—Conceptual works plotted with photographs. Through March 26. (Castelli, 142 Greene St.)

Barbara Kruger—Large-scale photomontages combining magazine pictures and texts by a conceptual artist. Through March 26. (Nosei, 100 Prince St.)

Cheryl Laemmle—A forest of fir trees cut out of Masonite occupies half the show (and one wall) while symbolic works in which a central canvas is flanked by a pair of complementary Masonite cutouts take care of the rest. Through March 26. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

Ellen Lanyon—Tableaux primarily representing nature are linked in a sixteen-panel free-standing canvas screen. Also, paintings and drawings. Through March 26. (Caldwell, 383 West Broadway.)

Michael Mogavero / Mark Milloff—Outsize paintings, freighted with social consciousness, of people in a line, often up against a wall, by a Neo-Expressionist. / Large paintings in which Bunyanesque figures made of Rhoplex and foamboard stand out in deep relief. Through Saturday, March 19. (Holly Solomon, 392 West Broadway.)

Jud Nelson / Charles Bell—Sculptures: "The Toilet Paper Series" speaks for itself (the medium is Carrara marble); also, two life-size figures, one cast in bronze and the other carved in marble. / Photo-Realist paintings of oversize tin ducks and other tin toys. Through March 26. (Meisel, 141 Prince St.)

Roman Opalka—A continuation of the series of paintings and drawings of numbers in sequence that the artist started in 1965; taped recordings, of Mr. Opalka executing same, accompany the works. Through March 26. (Weber, 142 Greene St.)

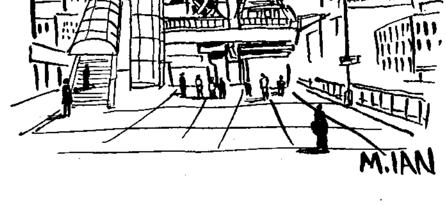
Joseph Raffael—A group of new paintings devoted to the Luxembourg Gardens. Through April 6. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Frances Siegel—Chalk drawings; the emphasis is on portraits. Through March 23. (Prince Street Gallery, 121 Wooster St. Opens daily, except Mondays, at noon.)

Group Shows—At **the drawing center,** 137 Greene St.: Among the dozen emerging artists in this show are Domenic Cretara, whose oils on paper update Old Master religious paintings, and Minnie Maude May Schuyler, whose pencilled sketches are a primitive kind of conceptual art. Through March 30. (Open Mondays; open Wednesday evenings until 8.) . . . **feldman,** 31 Mercer St.: "1984—A Preview" consists of works that illustrate the Orwellian thesis by upwards of seventy artists, among them Alice Aycock, George Segal, Roy Lichtenstein, Ed Ruscha. Through Saturday, March 12.

OTHER GALLERIES

Hiroshige (1797-1858)—Just over a hundred original woodblock prints, drawings, and pages from books. Through Saturday, March 19. (Pratt Manhattan Center, 160 Lexington Ave., at 30th St. Open Mondays.)



Stewart Hitch—Paintings of starlike figures. Through Saturday, March 19. (Bouckaert, 100 Hudson St.)

Frida Kahlo (1907-54) / **Tina Modotti** (1896-1942)—Sixty paintings by a self-taught Mexican Surrealist. / Eighty prints (a third are vintage), all reflecting the photographer's interest in Mexican politics in the twenties and technically derivative of Edward Weston. Through April 16. (Grey Art Gallery, New York University, Washington Pl., just east of Washington Sq. Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 to 6:30; Wednesdays, 10 to 8:30; Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 1 to 5.)

Group Shows—At the **federal hall national memorial,** 26 Wall St., at Broad St.: Nearly thirty portraits by contemporary artists represented in the collections of the Whitney Museum, which sponsored this exhibit. Robin Tewes, Mimi Gross, May Stevens, and John Ahearn are among those whose paintings, works on paper, and plaster reliefs are on display. Through April 1. (Mondays through Fridays, 11 to 3.) . . . **visual arts,** 209 E. 23rd St.: Troy Brauntuch, Robert Longo, David Salle, Julian Schnabel, Joel Shapiro, Paul Waldman, and Chris Wool are the artists in a show entitled "Big American Figure Drawings." Through March 24. (Mondays through Thursdays, noon to 9; Fridays, 11 to 4:30; Saturdays, 9 to 4.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Roy DeCarava—The Studio Museum in Harlem has mounted an exhibit of a hundred and twenty-five of his silverprints of jazz musicians. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

André Kertész / Arthur Rothstein—Photographs of landscapes and interiors from negatives printed about ten years ago. / New prints. Through Saturday, March 12. (Neikrug, 224 E. 68th St. Wednesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.)

Marvin Lazarus (1918-82)—Informal portraits of artists done in the fifties, among them Motherwell, Reinhardt, Man Ray, and Giacometti, whose photograph is elongated and converted into a sculptural piece as spindly as his own creations. Representative works by most of the artists are also on view. Through Thursday, March 17. (Pearl, 38 E. 57th St.)

Robert Mapplethorpe—Two shows: Photographic works and wall constructions. (Miller, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.) . . . ¶ Photographs of a woman bodybuilder. (Castelli, 142 Greene St.) Both through March 26.

Sarah Moon / Len Jenshel—Eighty prints from the past decade by the contemporary French fashion photographer Marielle Hadengue, who signs her work Sarah Moon. / Interior and exterior views (the former photographed in winter) of mansions in Newport and on Long Island which are now tourist attractions. Through April 3. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays through Thursdays, noon to 8; Fridays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

Louis Stettner—Black-and-white photographs from the past eight years. Through March 27. (Midtown Y Gallery, 344 E. 14th St. Sundays through Thursdays, noon to 8; Fridays, noon to 4.)

Group Shows—At the **marlborough,** 40 W. 57th St.: Prints by Berenice Abbott, Brassaï, Bill Brandt, and Irving Penn. Through April 2. (Open Mondays.) . . . **prakapas,** 19 E. 71st St.: Photographs by Belgian Surrealist painters René Magritte, Raoul Ubac, Marcel Marien, and others. Through April 9. (Opens at noon; open Tuesday evenings until 8.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—The Vatican Collections. Through June 12. . . . ¶ An exhibit of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italian drawings by such masters as Michelangelo, Raphael, and Leonardo da Vinci. All of the works, which number close to a hundred, are from the museum's collections. Through April 17. . . . ¶ A show of

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come from them.—*Pascal*

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eighty paintings, sculptures, and decorative works received as gifts in the past year, ranging from third-millennium B.C. metalwork cosmetic boxes to a 1982 watercolor by Dorothea Rockburne. Through March 27. . . . ¶ "La Belle Epoque," a show of costumes in period settings. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8:45; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 4:45; Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 18 W. 54th St.—"Prints from Blocks: Gauguin to Now," a survey of woodcuts and linoleum cuts as represented in the museum's print reservoir. The artists also include Nolde, Matisse, Carol Summers, and Georg Baselitz. Through May 15. . . . ¶ An architectural exhibit consisting of one large model of each of three skyscrapers under construction in Hong Kong; Jeddah, Saudi Arabia; and Boston. Also, drawings and photomontages. Through March 29. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A retrospective of sculptures and drawings by Julio González (1876-1942), the Spanish artist who was in the vanguard of sculptors working in welded metal. Starts Friday, March 11. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—An exhibit of approximately thirty paintings by the Eight, commemorating the seventy-fifth anniversary of their show. Through March 20. . . . ¶ A Frank Stella print retrospective. Through Sunday, March 13. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—The museum's permanent collection is the primary reason for a visit right now. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"Star Gods of the Ancient Americas," a show of artifacts from early cultures whose people worshipped the moon and stars. Through March 27. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, Broadway at 155th St.—An exhibit of works by thirty-two painters and sculptors who are candidates for seven Academy-Institute awards. Through April 2. (Open daily, except Mondays, 1 to 4.)

American Craft Museum I, 44 W. 53rd St.—A show of twenty-five clay and glass vessels by Glen Lukens (1887-1967). Through April 3. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St.—A loan show of nearly a hundred Buddhist paintings and sculptures identified with the remote Vajrayana monasteries that lined the trans-Himalayan trade routes during a thousand-year period that began in the seventh century A.D. Through April 3. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5, and Tuesday evenings until 8:30; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—A show of about a hundred and fifty fanciful modifications of the south façade of the Carnegie Mansion (otherwise known as the Cooper-Hewitt Museum). Each work had the same line drawing of the façade as its starting point; some of the embellishers include Eugène Mihaesco, Pierre Le-Tan, Edward Koren, Charles Addams, and Mamie Eisenhower—who on hers drew an American flag on the building's rooftop. Through May 1. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

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Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—An exhibition of six very large constructions in mixed mediums by Frank Stella, who took his inspiration from a collection of photographs of Polish wooden synagogues. Through May 1. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays through Thursdays, noon to 5; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—The variety and abundance of symbolic animal imagery in ancient and medieval art provide the basis for a show of cylinder seals and illuminated manuscripts, drawn primarily from the library's collections. Through April 10. . . . ¶ William Blake: Twenty-one watercolors done as illustrations for "The Book of Job," an autograph copy of his collection of poetry known as the Pickering Manuscript, and other works. Through March 31. . . . ¶ A display of about fifty drawings by the eighteenth-century French draftsman Gravelot. Through March 31. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—A loan exhibit of Italian still-life painting covering three centuries (starting with the fifteen-nineties) offers among its forty-six works two attributed to Caravaggio, from the Galleria Borghese, in Rome. Through Sunday, March 13. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—A show of color-field paintings by Sam Gilliam. Through Sunday, March 13. . . . **PHOTOGRAPHY:** Roy DeCarava's series on jazz musicians. Through March 20. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 9; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

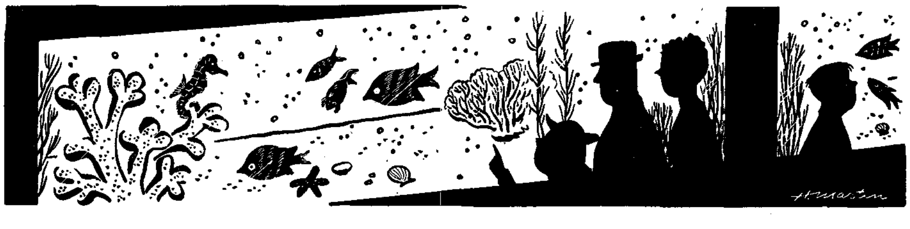
EXPERIMENTAL OUTPOSTS

(Various avant-garde enterprises that may involve not only traditional art but music, video, dance, and so on.)

Artists Space, 105 Hudson St., at Franklin St. Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6.—A show of paintings, sculptures, and photographs by Ross Anderson, Ericka Beckman, Edwin Rath, and others. . . . ¶ An installation involving flowing water by Howard Fried. Both shows through March 26.

Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. 925-4671. Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6.—Yura Adams (performance), Thursday, March 10, at 8:30; Fiona Templeton (performance), Thursday, March 17, at 8:30. . . . ¶ Lawrence Weiner, Ian Wilson, Hanne Darboven, and other artists showing works incorporating words. Through April 2.

The Kitchen, 484 Broome St. 925-3615. Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.—Kenneth King & Dancers/Co., Wednesday through Sunday, March 16-20, at 8:30. . . . ¶ A light-sound-video installation by Sokhi Wagner. Starts Saturday, March 12.



MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7459; for Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave., at 83rd St., 570-3949; for Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 427-4410; and for Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Wednesday, March 9, at 7: "Don Carlo," with Mirella Freni, Grace Bumbry, Placido Domingo, and Louis Quilico; conducted by James Levine. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 10, at 7:30: "Der Rosenkavalier," with Tatiana Troyanos, Kiri Te Kanawa, Judith Blegen, and Kurt Moll; James Levine. . . . ¶ Friday, March 11, at 8: "Madame Butterfly," with Teresa Zylis-Gara, Claudia Catania, Ermanno Mauro, and Richard Fredricks; Eugene Kohn. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 12, at 1: "La Bohème," with Linda Zoghby, Patricia Craig, Dano Raffanti, and Richard Stilwell; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 12, at 7: "Don Carlo," with Mirella Freni, Grace Bumbry, Placido Domingo, and Louis Quilico; James Levine. . . . ¶ Monday, March 14, at 8: "Madame Butterfly," with Teresa Zylis-Gara, Claudia Catania, Ermanno Mauro, and Richard Fredricks; Eugene Kohn. . . . ¶ Tuesday, March 15, at 7: "Don Carlo," with Mirella Freni, Bianca Berini, Placido Domingo, and Allan Monk; James Levine. . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 16, at 7:30: "Der Rosenkavalier," with Tatiana Troyanos, Kiri Te Kanawa, Judith Blegen, and Aage Haugland; James Levine. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 17, at 7: "Die Walküre," with Gwyneth Jones, Hildegard Behrens, Manfred Jung, and Franz Ferdinand Nentwig; Silvio Varviso. . . . ¶ Friday, March 18, at 7: "Don Carlo," with Mirella Freni, Bianca Berini, Placido Domingo, and Allan Monk; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 19, at 1:30: "Der Rosenkavalier," with Tatiana Troyanos, Kiri Te Kanawa, Judith Blegen, and Aage Haugland; James Levine. (A nonsubscription performance.) . . . ¶ Saturday, March 19, at 8: "Madame Butterfly," with Teresa Zylis-Gara, Claudia Catania, Ermanno Mauro, and Richard Fredricks; Eugene Kohn.

Bel Canto Opera—Gregory Ortega conducting Offenbach's one-act operettas, "A Lady in Lottery" and "Number 66," staged by Nelson Sheeley. (Robert F. Wagner Junior High School Auditorium, 220 E. 76th St. Saturdays, March 12 and 19, at 7:30; Sundays, March 13 and 20, at 2:30; and Friday, March 18, at 7:30. Tickets at the door on the days of the performances.)

John Brownlee Opera Theatre—A triple bill in English: Igor Stravinsky's "Renard," Paul Hindemith's "Santa Susanna" (New York première), and Erich Korngold's "The Ring of Polycrates." Conducted by C. William Harwood and staged by Lou Galterio. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, 120 Claremont Ave., at 122nd St. Thursday, March 17, and Saturday, March 19, at 8, and Sunday, March 20, at 2:30. For information about tickets, call 749-2802, Ext. 531.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall—Christoph von Dohnanyi conducting a Haydn-Henze-Dvořák program on Thursday, March 10, at 8; Friday, March 11, at 2; Saturday, March 12, at 8; and Tuesday, March 15, at 7:30 (no soloists). . . . ¶ Rafael Kubelik conducting an all-Beethoven program on Thursday, March 17, at 8; Friday, March 18, at 2; and Saturday, March 19, at 8 (all with Alicia de Larrocha, piano).

National Symphony Orchestra—Mstislav Rostropovich conducting a Tchaikovsky-Shostakovich program, with Galina Vishnevskaya, soprano, and Stafford Dean, bass. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, March 9, at 8.)

Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and Women's Chorus—Sergiu Comissiona directing, with Cho-Liang Lin, violin. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, March 12, at 8.)

Brooklyn Philharmonic—Lukas Foss conducting a program of music by Mozart and Beethoven, and the New York première of Bernd Alois Zimmermann's "Concerto for Violin and Orchestra." With Christiane Edinger, violin. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Friday and Saturday, March 11-12, at 8, and Sunday, March 13, at 3.)

New Irish Chamber Orchestra—James Galway conducting and acting as flute soloist. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, March 13, at 3.)

Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra—Michael Gielen conducting a Crumb-Bruckner program. (Carnegie Hall. Monday, March 14, at 8.)

Dresden Staatskapelle—Herbert Blomstedt conducting a program of music by Udo Zimmermann, Richard Strauss, and Beethoven. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, March 16, at 8.)

Prague Chamber Orchestra—Thirty-six musicians who perform without a conductor. With Boris Krajny, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Thursday, March 17, at 8.)

Y Chamber Symphony—At Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y—Wednesday, March 9, at 8: Henryk Szeryng conducting a program of Bach concertos and acting as violin soloist. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 19, at 8, and Sunday, March 20, at 3: Gerard Schwarz conducting, with Bella Davidovich, piano.

New York Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra—Raffael Adler conducting, with Michael Rudiakov, cello. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Wednesday, March 9, at 8.)

Musica Aeterna Orchestra—Frederic Waldman conducting, with Håkan Hagegård, baritone, and Hamao Fujiwara, Curtis Macomber, and Bruce Berg, all violin. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Saturday, March 12, at 8, and Sunday, March 13, at 6.)

Ensemble for Early Music's Grand Bande—A program of music by J. S. Bach and sons. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, March 19, at 8.)

Canticum Novum Singers—Harold Rosenbaum directing a program of music by Josquin des Prés. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Saturday, March 12, at 8.)

Gregg Smith Singers—Gregg Smith directing a program called "An Odyssey in Space." (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Saturday, March 12, at 8:30. For information about tickets, call 865-7035.)

Cappella Nova—Richard Taruskin directing an a-cappella program of music for the paschal season. (St. Joseph's Church, 371 Sixth Ave. Sunday, March 13, at 7:30. Tickets at the door on the evening of the performance.)

Harmonic Choir—David Hykes directing a program of his own music. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Friday through Sunday, March 18-20, at 8. Tickets at the door on the evenings of the performances.)

RECITALS

Leon Bates—Piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, March 9, at 8.)

Concert Royal—The first two in a series of three concerts. (St. Thomas Church, Fifth Ave. at 53rd St. Wednesday, March 9, at 7:30, a program called "Artistry of the Baroque Flute;" and Wednesday, March 16, at 7:30, a program called "The French Style." Tickets at the door on the evenings of the performances.)

André Watts—Piano. (Carnegie Hall. Thursday, March 10, at 8.)

Hilda Harris—Mezzo-soprano. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, March 10, at 8.)

Youri Egorov—Piano, in a Chopin-Schumann program. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Thursday, March 10, at 8.)

Stephen Bishop-Kovacevich—Piano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Thursday, March 10, at 8.)

Paco Peña—Flamenco guitarist. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Thursday, March 10, at 8.)

Andres Segovia—Classical guitarist. (Avery Fisher Hall. Friday, March 11, at 8.)

Benjamin Verdery and Rie Schmidt—Classical guitarist and flutist. (CAMI Hall, 165 W. 57th St. Friday, March 11, at 8. For information about tickets, call 757-3255.)

Beaux Arts Trio—Chamber music. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum.

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Friday, March 11, at 8. . . . ¶ Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, March 13, at 3.)

Sylvan Wind Quintet—With Randy Ellis, oboe. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Friday, March 11, at 8. For information about tickets, call 663-8339.)

Bach Winterfest—A program of music by J. S. Bach and his sons C. P. E. Bach and W. F. Bach, performed by Elaine Comparone, harpsichord. (St. Joseph's Church, 371 Sixth Ave. Friday, March 11, at 8:30, and a repeat performance at St. Michael's Church, 225 W. 99th St., on Saturday, March 12, at 8:30. For information about tickets, call 666-9427.)

Kimball Wheeler—Mezzo-soprano, in a one-hour program of songs by William Hawley, Paul Suits, and others. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Saturday, March 12, at 5. For information about tickets, call 865-7035.)

Heidi Lehwalder and Paula Robison—Harp and flute. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Saturday, March 12, at 8.)

St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—A program of music for winds and strings. With Joseph Anderer, horn. (St. Joseph's Church, 371 Sixth Ave. Saturday, March 12, at 8. For information about tickets, call 226-1115.)

Continuum—A program of contemporary piano music, performed by Cheryl Seltzer and Joel Sachs, with Victoria Villamil, soprano, and percussion and electronic accompaniment. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, March 12, at 8.)

Prague String Quartet—Chamber music. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. Sunday, March 13, at 2. For tickets, call 586-4680.)

Alicia de Larrocha—Piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, March 13, at 3.)

Morton Estrin—Piano. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Sunday, March 13, at 3.)

Edward Aldwell—Piano, in the second in a series of three all-Bach programs. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Sunday, March 13, at 8.)

Charles Libove and Nina Lugovoy—Violin and piano. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Monday, March 14, at 8.)

Kenneth Cooper—Harpsichord, in an all-Bach program, with Ani Kavafian, violin; Josephine Mongiardo, soprano; Timothy Eddy, cello; Ida Kavafian, viola; and Michael Riley, bass-baritone. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Monday, March 14, at 8.)

Music from Marlboro—Cynthia Raim, piano; Hiroko Yajima and Michaela Paetsch, violin; Samuel Rhodes and Steven Tenenbom, viola; and Bonnie Hampton, cello. (Alice Tully Hall. Monday, March 14, at 8. . . . ¶ Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Thursday, March 17, at 8.)

Quintet of the Americas—Chamber music, with Puli Toro, mezzo-soprano. (Center for Inter-American Relations, 680 Park Ave., at 68th St. Monday, March 14, at 8. For information about tickets, call 249-8950, Ext. 551.)

Arkady Aronov—Piano. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Tuesday, March 15, at 2.)

Ruth Geiger—Piano. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Tuesday, March 15, at 8.)

Benita Valente and Richard Goode—Soprano and piano, in a lieder and chamber-music recital, with assisting artists. (Alice Tully Hall. Tuesday, March 15, at 8.)

Carter Brey—Cello. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Tuesday, March 15, at 8.)

Sara Faust—Piano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Tuesday, March 15, at 8.)

Group for Contemporary Music—A program of music by Chester Biscardi, John Cage, Daniel Levitan, and others, performed by the New Jersey Percussion Ensemble. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Tuesday, March 15, at 8.)

Rip Keller—Piano. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Wednesday, March 16, at 8.)

National Chorale Soloists—Martin Josman directing the second in a series of four concerts of vocal and instrumental chamber music, this one with Crail Conner, soprano; Mary Ann Hart, mezzo-soprano; Thomas Poole, tenor; David Hamilton, bass; Virginia Brewer, oboe; and others. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Wednesday, March 16, at 8. For information about tickets, call 869-0970.)

Concord String Quartet—The fourth in a series of six concerts presenting the Beethoven cycle. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Wednesday, March 16, at 8.)

Jeffrey Swann—Piano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Thursday, March 17, at 8.)

League-ISCM—The fifth in this season's series of six programs of contemporary music, this one performed by Rolf Schulte, violin; Lawrence Dutton, viola; Joel Krosnick, cello; and Robert Black and Aleck Karis, piano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Thursday, March 17, at 8.)

New York University Contemporary Chamber Players—Chamber music. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Thursday, March 17, at 8.)

Maurizio Pollini—Piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. Friday, March 18, at 8.)

I Solisti Aquilani—Vittorio Antonellini conducting, with Gary Karr, double bass. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, March 18, at 8.)

Melos Quartet—An all-Beethoven program. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Friday, March 18, at 8.)

Vladimir Ashkenazy—Piano, in a Schubert-Chopin program. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, March 19, at 8.)

Guarneri Quartet—With Cecile Licad, piano. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Saturday, March 19, at 8.)

Aston Magna—A baroque ensemble. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Saturday, March 19, at 8.)

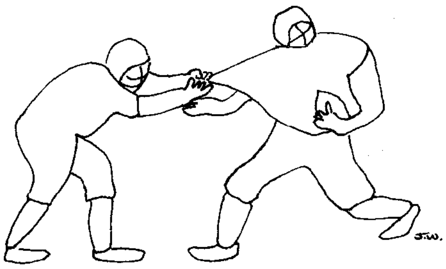
Chamber Music—The Emerson String Quartet; Colin Carr, cello; and Scott Nickrenz, viola. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Saturday, March 19, at 8:30, and Sunday, March 20, at 2.)

MISCELLANY

Benefit Concert—Yehudi Menuhin conducting members of the New York Philharmonic, with Dora Schwarzberg, violin, in a benefit for the American Committee for Shaare Zedek Hospital, in Jerusalem. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, March 13, at 7:30.)

Music in Space—Composer-pianist-singer Jocy de Oliveira presenting a program of her own music on piano and synthesizer, with assisting artists and with visual effects. (Hayden Planetarium, Central Park W. at 81st St. Tuesday and Wednesday, March 15-16, at 7:30 and 9:15. For information about tickets, call 249-8950, Ext. 551.)

Festival of the American New Music Consortium—At the **TOP OF THE PARK,** Loeb Student Center. Thursday, March 17, at 10 A.M.: The Gageego Players; David MacBride, piano; Tamsin Fitzgerald, flute; Tom Goldstein, percussion; the New York University Contemporary Players; and Catherine Rowe, soprano. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 17, at 3: The CIOMPI String Quartet; Robert Pollock and Phyllis Rappeport, piano; and Elizabeth Erskine Patches, soprano. (Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. No tickets necessary.) . . . **MERKIN CONCERT HALL,** Abraham Goodman House. Thursday, March 17, at 8: The New York University Contemporary Players; Jack Kreiselman, clarinet; and Bernard Fauchet, piano. . . . **NEW YORK UNIVERSITY THEATRE,** 35 W. 4th St. Friday, March 18, at 10 A.M.: Gretel Shanley and Patrick Purswell, flute; Dinos Constantinides, violin; and Brian Fennelly, piano. (No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Friday, March 18, at 8: The Anemone Players; Gretel Shanley and Patrick Purswell, flute; the Gageego Players; and Jerry Kuderna, piano. (Tickets at the door on the evening of the performance.) . . . ¶ Saturday, March 19, at 10 A.M.: An electro-acoustic program. (No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Saturday, March 19, at 3: Bernard Fauchet, piano, and Jack Kreiselman, clarinet. (No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Saturday, March 19, at 7: The Composers Guild of New Jersey; the New Repertory Ensemble of New York; One Plus One Quartet; and Genevieve Chinn, piano. (Tickets at the door on the evening of the performance.)



SPORTS

(The box-office number for Madison Square Garden is 564-4400.)

Professional Basketball—At **MADISON SQUARE GARDEN** (all games at 7:30): Knicks vs. Portland, Saturday, March 12. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Atlanta, Tuesday, March 15. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Washington, Saturday, March 19. . . . **BYRNE MEADOWLANDS ARENA** (1-201 935-8888): Nets vs. Knicks, Wednesday, March 9, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Boston, Friday, March 11, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Portland, Sunday, March 13, at 7:05. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Detroit, Tuesday, March 15, at 7:35.

Boxing—Golden Gloves New York City finals. Sponsored by the News Charities. (Madison Square Garden. Friday, March 18, at 7:30.)

Hockey—At **MADISON SQUARE GARDEN:** Rangers vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Monday, March 14, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Islanders, Wednesday, March 16, at 7:35. . . . **NASSAU COLISEUM:** Islanders vs. Washington Capitals, Saturday, March 12, at 5:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Saturday, March 19, at 8:05. (Hempstead Turnpike, Uniondale, L.I. 1-516 794-9100.) . . . **BYRNE MEADOWLANDS ARENA** (1-201 935-3900): Devils vs. Hartford Whalers, Thursday, March 10. . . . ¶ Devils vs. Calgary Flames, Monday, March 14. . . . ¶ Devils vs. Islanders, Thursday, March 17. (Games begin at 7:35.)

Karate—All-American Open Karate Championships. (Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden. Saturday, March 19, at 8.)

Racing—At **AQUEDUCT:** Mondays and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 1, and Sundays at 1:05; through Monday, May 16. The Toboggan Handicap, Saturday, March 12, and the Distaff Handicap, Saturday, March 19. . . . **BOWIE,** Md.: Weekdays at 1; through Tuesday, March 15. The John B. Campbell Handicap, Saturday, March 12.

Trotting—At **ROOSEVELT RACEWAY,** Westbury: Weeknights at 8; through Saturday, April 2. . . . **MEADOWLANDS:** Weeknights at 8; through Tuesday, Aug. 9.

ET ALIA

Poetry and Prose Readings—Carolyn Forché and Marilyn Hacker reading from their own poetry. (Donnell Library Auditorium, 20 W. 53rd St. Thursday, March 10, at 6. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Diane Wakoski reading from her own poetry. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Wednesday, March 16, at 8. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Norman Mailer reading from his own fiction. (West Side Y, 5 W. 63rd St. 787-6557. Friday, March 18, at 8.)

Flower Show—The Spring Flower Show of the Horticultural Society of New York, 128 W. 58th St. Friday, March 11, from 10:30 to 7; Saturday, March 12, from 10:30 to 6; and Sunday, March 13, from 10:30 to 5.

Auctions—At **SOTHEBY'S,** York Ave. at 72nd St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 9:30 to 5; Sunday, March 13, from 1 to 5.) Thursday and Friday, March 10-11, at 10:15 and 2: Old Master and nineteenth- and twentieth-century prints. . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 16, at 10:15 and 2, and Thursday, March 17, at 2: Jewelry and watches. Exhibition starts Saturday, March 12. . . . **CHRISTIE'S,** Park Ave. at 59th St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.) Wednesday, March 9, at 10 and 2: American and European prints. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 12, at 10: English and Continental furniture and objects of art. . . . **PHILLIPS,** 406 E. 79th St. (Exhibition hours: Weekdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.) Thursday, March 10, at 11: Furniture, silver, Oriental art, and decorations. . . . ¶ Tuesday, March 15, at 1: Jewelry. Exhibition starts Saturday, March 12.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

EAST SIDE

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Through March 13: "The Honeymoon Killers" (†); and "You Are Not I" (1981; directed by Sara Driver).
From March 15: A festival of films from Greece.

R.K.O. Century Art, 36 E. 8th. (473-7014)
"Tootsie" (†).

St. Marks Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 8th. (533-9292)
Through March 10: "Time Stands Still" (Péter Gothár; in Hungarian); and "Hester Street" (†).
March 11-17: "Veronika Voss" (Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Rosel Zech; and "Man of Iron" (1981; Andrzej Wajda; in Polish).
From March 18: To be announced.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Victor/Victoria" (†) and "My Favorite Year" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Table for Five" (Robert Lieberman), with Jon Voight.

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
Through March 17: "Lovesick" (†).
From March 18: "High Road to China" (Brian G. Hutton), with Tom Selleck and Bess Armstrong.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "The Lords of Discipline" (Franc Roddam), with David Keith and Robert Prosky.
Theatre 2: "Tootsie" (†).
Theatre 3: "Sophie's Choice" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"48 Hrs." (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Starstruck" (Gillian Armstrong; an Australian film), with Jo Kennedy.

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Through March 17: "Table for Five" (Robert Lieberman), with Jon Voight.
From March 18: "High Road to China" (Brian G. Hutton), with Tom Selleck and Bess Armstrong.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"The Verdict" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Britannia Hospital" (Lindsay Anderson), with Leonard Rossiter and Graham Crowden.

Manhattan 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "The Year of Living Dangerously" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sophie's Choice" (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "48 Hrs." (†).
Theatre 2: "The King of Comedy" (†).

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
Through March 10: "Coup de Torchon" (†).
From March 11: "The Road Warrior" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "Local Hero" (Bill Forsyth), with Peter Riegert.
Theatre 2: "Betrayal" (David Jones), with Jeremy Irons and Ben Kingsley.

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Lovesick" (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 10: "Missing" (†).
From March 11: "Tales of Ordinary Madness" (Marco Ferreri), with Ben Gazzara.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Frances" (Graeme Clifford), with Jessica Lange and Sam Shepard.

Loews New York Twin 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Tootsie" (†).
Theatre 2: "E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
Through March 10: "Das Boot" (†).
From March 11: "Say Amen, Somebody" (George Nierenberg), a documentary on gospel music.

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Tender Mercies" (Bruce Beresford), with Robert Duvall.

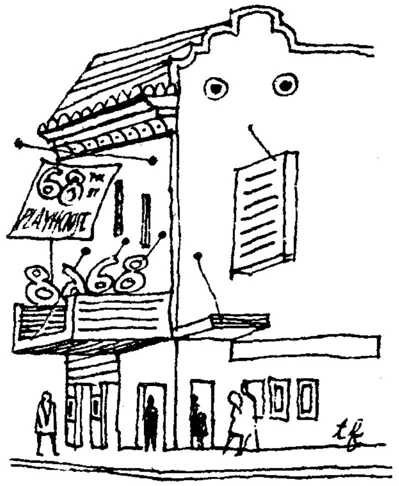
72nd Street East, 1st Ave. at 72nd. (288-9304)
"An Officer and a Gentleman" (†).

U. A. 85th St. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
Through March 10: "Missing" (†).
From March 11: "Joystick."

Loews Orpheum 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "The Lords of Discipline" (Franc Roddam), with David Keith and Robert Prosky.
Theatre 2: "Vigilante."

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
"Sophie's Choice" (†).

R.K.O. Century 86th St. Twin, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: "Table for Five" (Robert Lieberman), with Jon Voight.
Theatre 2: "The Year of Living Dangerously" (†).



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 26.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum 1 and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: "Johnny West" (1977; directed by Roald Koller; in German), with Rio Reiser.
Theatre 2: Through March 15: "The Constant Factor" (1980; Krzysztof Zanussi; in Polish). From March 16: "Aria for an Athlete" (1980; Filip Bajon; in Polish).

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Hollywood Out-Takes & Rare Footage."
Theatre 2: "Kamikaze '89" (Wolf Gremm; in German), with Rainer Werner Fassbinder.

Greenwich Playhouse 1 and 2, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Sophie's Choice" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sophie's Choice" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Frances" (Graeme Clifford), with Jessica Lange and Sam Shepard.
Theatre 2: Through March 10: "Frances." From March 11: "Come and Get It."
Theatre 3: "The Year of Living Dangerously" (†).
Theatre 4: "Coup de Torchon" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
Through March 17: "Parsifal" (†).
From March 18: "An Officer and a Gentleman" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Gandhi" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
Through March 10: "Playtime" (†).
March 11-17: "Mr. Hulot's Holiday" (†).
From March 18: "New Directors/New Films," a fourteen-day series; see listings under Film Libraries, Etc.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"The Gift" (Michel Lang; in French), with Clio Goldsmith and Pierre Mondy.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Sophie's Choice" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Tootsie" (†).

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "The Night of the Shooting Stars" (†).
Theatre 2: "La Nuit de Varennes" (Ettore Scola; in French), with Harvey Keitel and Marcello Mastroianni.
Theatre 3: Through March 17: "The Stationmaster's Wife" (1977; Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Kurt Raab. From March 18: "Success" (1982; William Richert), with Jeff Bridges, Bianca Jagger, and Ned Beatty.

Cinema Studio 1 and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Diva" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Pirates of Penzance" (Wilford Leach), with Kevin Kline and Linda Ronstadt.

Embassy 72nd St. 1 and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "Choice of Arms" (Alain Corneau; in French), with Yves Montand and Gérard Depardieu.
Theatre 2: "Lianna" (John Sayles).

Loews 83rd Quad, B'way at 83rd. (877-3190)
Theatre 1: Through March 10: "Lovesick" (†). From March 11: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through March 10: "Sophie's Choice" (†). From March 11: To be announced.
Theatre 3: Through March 10: "The Year of Living Dangerously" (†). From March 11: To be announced.
Theatre 4: Through March 10: "Tootsie" (†). From March 11: To be announced.

New Yorker 1 and 2, B'way at 88th. (580-7900)
Theatre 1: "The Verdict" (†).
Theatre 2: "Frances" (Graeme Clifford), with Jessica Lange and Sam Shepard.

Olympia Quad, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through March 10: "Victor/Victoria" (†) and "My Favorite Year" (†). From March 11: "Trenchcoat" (Michael Tuchner), with Margot Kidder and Robert Hays.
Theatre 2: Through March 10: "Missing" (†). From March 11: "10 to Midnight" (J. Lee Thompson), with Charles Bronson.
Theatre 3: Through March 10: "Time Stands Still" (Péter Gothár; in Polish). From March 11: "Joystick."
Theatre 4: "Vigilante."

TIMES SQUARE AREA

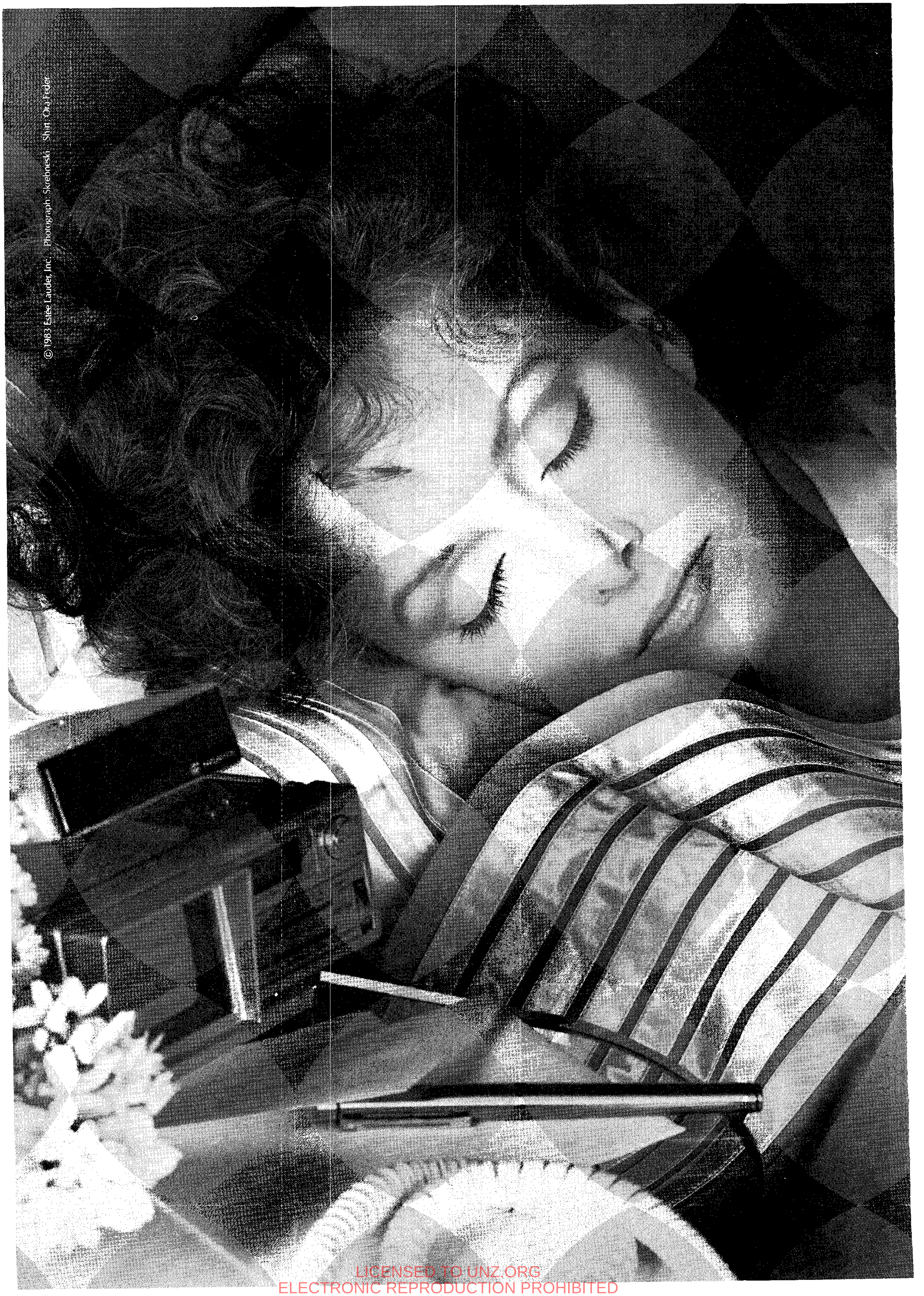
Criterion Theatres, B'way at 44th. (582-1795)
Theatre 1: "The Entity" (directed by Sidney J. Furie), with Barbara Hershey and Ron Silver.
Theatre 2: "Table for Five" (Robert Lieberman), with Jon Voight.
Theatre 3: "Sophie's Choice" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Dark Crystal" (Jim Henson and Frank Oz).
Theatre 5: "The Verdict" (†).
Theatre 6: "Caligula" (1980), with Malcolm McDowell.

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"48 Hrs." (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, B'way at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "48 Hrs." (†).
Theatre 3: Through March 10: "Victor/Victoria" (†) and "My Favorite Year" (†). From March 11: "The Year of Living Dangerously" (†).
Theatre 4: "An Officer and a Gentleman" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, B'way at 44th. (869-8340)
"Let's Spend the Night Together" (Hal Ashby), with The Rolling Stones.

Loews State 1 and 2, B'way at 45th. (582-5060)
Theatre 1: "The Lords of Discipline" (Franc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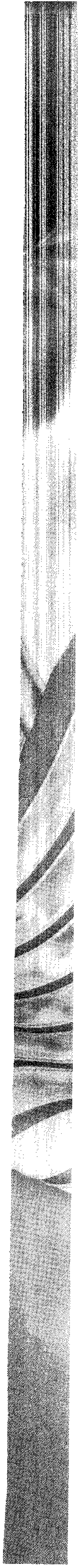

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that cannot be duplicated,
that does what no other
treatment can do.

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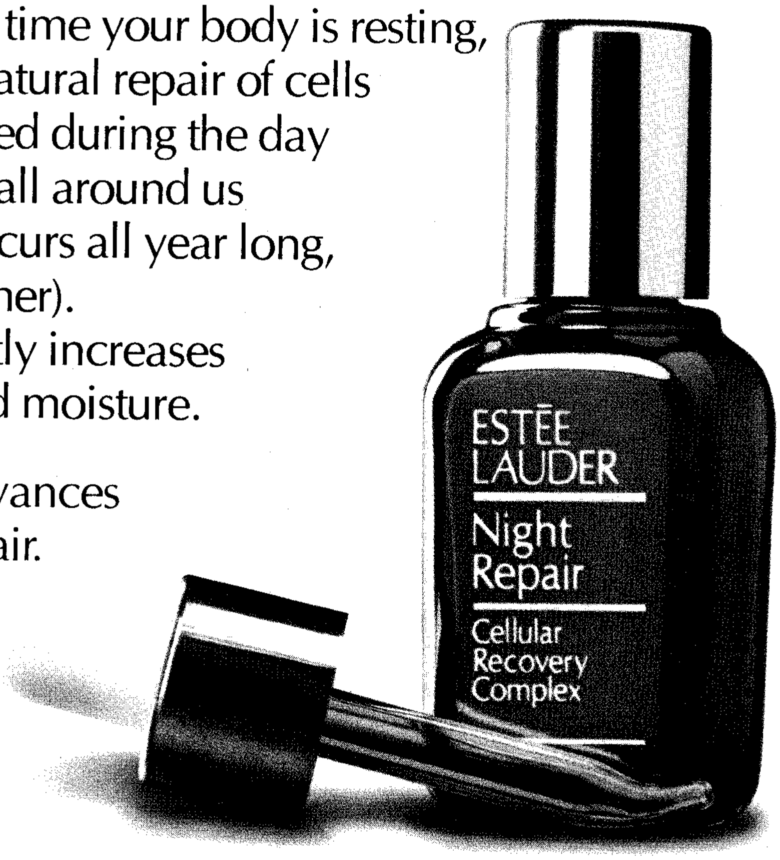
Today Estée Lauder advances
skin care to Night Repair.
Use it tonight and
wake up to
better looking skin.



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Roddam), with David Keith and Robert Prosky.
Theatre 2: "The Man from Snowy River" (George Miller), with Kirk Douglas and Jack Thompson.

MOVIELAND, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial" (†).

NEW EMBASSY 49TH STREET, Seventh Ave. at 49th. (757-7003)
"The Pirates of Penzance" (Wilford Leach), with Kevin Kline and Linda Ronstadt.

RIVOLI 1 AND 2, B'way at 49th. (247-1633)
Theatre 1: "Vigilante."
Theatre 2: Through March 10: "Sorceress." From March 11: "10 to Midnight" (J. Lee Thompson), with Charles Bronson.

R.K.O. CENTURY CINERAMA TWIN, B'way at 47th. (975-8366/8369)
Theatre 1: Through March 10: "The Year of Living Dangerously" (†). From March 11: "Joystick."
Theatre 2: "One Dark Night."

R.K.O. CENTURY NATIONAL TWIN, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: Through March 10: "Missing" (†). From March 11: "Trenchcoat" (Michael Tuchner), with Margot Kidder and Robert Hays.
Theatre 2: "Lovesick" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

AGEE ROOM, 144 Bleecker St. (473-8306; theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Through March 10: "Land of Look Behind" (1982; directed by Alan Greenberg), with Gregory Isaacs.
March 11-12: "The Nutty Professor" (1963; Jerry Lewis), with Lewis, Stella Stevens, and Del Moore; and "Hollywood or Bust" (1956; Frank Tashlin), with Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis, and Anita Ekberg.
March 13-14: "Hardly Working" (1981; Jerry Lewis), with Lewis and Susan Oliver; and "Rock-A-Bye Baby" (1958; Frank Tashlin), with Jerry Lewis and Marilyn Maxwell.
March 15-16: "The Disorderly Orderly" (1964; Frank Tashlin), with Jerry Lewis, Glenda Farrell, and Everett Sloane; and "The Geisha Boy" (1958; Frank Tashlin), with Jerry Lewis, Marie McDonald, and Sessue Hayakawa.
March 17-18: "The Patsy" (1964; Jerry Lewis), with Lewis, Ina Balin, Keenan Wynn, and Phil Harris; and "Living It Up" (1954; Norman Taurog), with Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis, and Janet Leigh.
From March 19: "The Bellboy" (1960; Jerry Lewis), with Lewis; and "The Errand Boy" (1962; Jerry Lewis), with Lewis and Brian Donlevy.

BLEECKER ST. CINEMA, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Through March 10: "The State of Things" (1983; Wim Wenders).
March 11-17: "Muddy River" (1983; in Japanese).
From March 18: "A Hard Day's Night" (1964; Richard Lester), with the Beatles.

CARNEGIE HALL CINEMA, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)
Through March 10: "Private Life" (1983; Yuli Raisman; in Russian).
From March 11: "Victory March."

CINEMA VILLAGE, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through March 10: "The Rose" (1979; Mark Rydell), with Bette Midler, Alan Bates, and Frederic Forrest; and "Piaf—The Early Years" (1974; Guy Casaril; in French), with Brigitte Ariel.
March 11-12: "1900" (1977; Bernardo Bertolucci), with Robert De Niro, Burt Lancaster, Donald Sutherland, Dominique Sanda, Sterling Hayden, and Gérard Depardieu.
March 13-15: "The Damned" (†); and "Death in Venice" (1971; Luchino Visconti), with Dirk Bogarde.
March 16-17: "Diabolique" (1955; Henri-Georges Clouzot; in French), with Simone Signoret, Vera Clouzot, and Paul Meurisse; and "Cat People" (1982; Paul Schrader), with Nastassia Kinski, Malcolm McDowell, and John Heard.
March 18-19: "Catch-22" (1970; Mike Nichols), with Alan Arkin; and "If . . ." (1969; Lindsay Anderson), with Malcolm McDowell.

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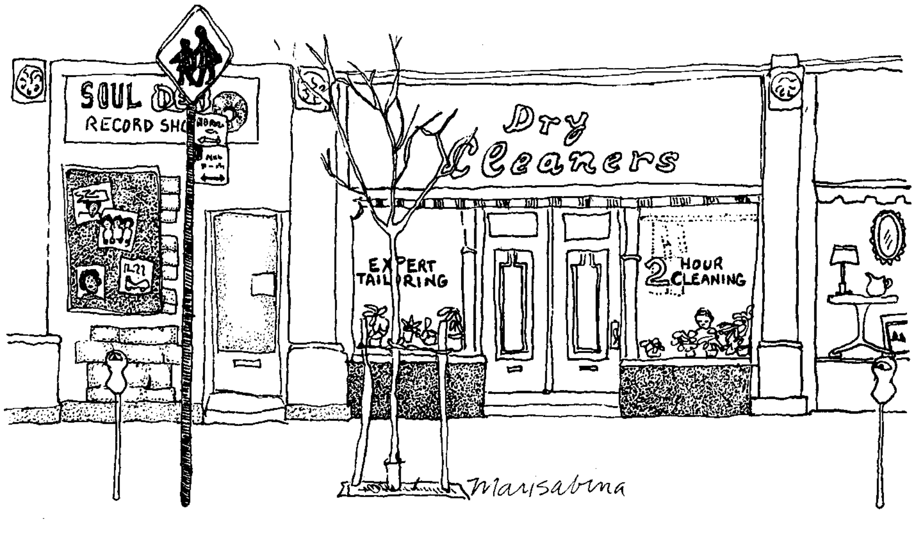
HOLLYWOOD TWIN CINEMA 1, 8th Ave. at 47th. (246-0717)
March 9: "Moby Dick" (1956; John Huston), with Gregory Peck, Richard Basehart, and Orson Welles; and "Billy Budd" (1962; Peter Ustinov), with Robert Ryan, Peter Ustinov, Melvyn Douglas, and Terence Stamp.
March 10-12: "Taxi Driver" (1976; Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro, Harvey Keitel, Cybill Shepherd, and Jodie Foster; and "Mean Streets" (1973; Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro and Harvey Keitel.
March 13-14: "Yojimbo" (1961; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune; and "Sanjuro" (†).
March 15-16: "San Francisco" (1936; W. S. Van Dyke), with Clark Gable, Jeanette MacDonald, and Spencer Tracy; and "The Merry Widow" (1934), with Jeanette MacDonald and Maurice Chevalier.
March 17-19: "The Producers" (†); and "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum" (1966; Richard Lester), with Zero Mostel, Phil Silvers, Jack Gilford, and Buster Keaton.

HOLLYWOOD TWIN CINEMA 2, 8th Ave. at 47th. (246-0717)
Through March 10: "The Country Girl" (1954; George Seaton), with Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly, and William Holden; and "The Farmer's Daughter" (1947; H. C. Potter), with Loretta Young, Joseph Cotten, and Ethel Barrymore.
March 11-12: "Goldfinger" (1964; Guy Hamilton) and "Thunderball" (1965; Terence Young), both with Sean Connery as James Bond.
March 13: "The Guns of Navarone" (1961; J. Lee Thompson), with Gregory Peck, David Niven, and Anthony Quinn.
March 14-15: "O Lucky Man!" (1973) and "If . . ." (1969), both films directed by Lindsay Anderson, with Malcolm McDowell.
March 16-17: "The Warriors" (1979; Walter Hill), with Michael Beck, James Remar, and Thomas Waites; and "The Wanderers" (†).
March 18-19: "Rebel Without a Cause" (†) and "East of Eden" (†).

METRO CINEMA, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
March 9: "The American Friend" (1977; Wim Wenders), with Dennis Hopper and Bruno Ganz; and "Black and White Like Day and Night" (1981; Wolfgang Petersen; in German), with Bruno Ganz.
March 10: "Throne of Blood" (1957) and "The Lower Depths" (1957), both films in Japanese, directed by Akira Kurosawa, with Toshiro Mifune.
March 11: "Marius" (1931; Alexander Korda) and "Fanny" (1932; Marc Allégret), both films in French, with Raimu, Pierre Fresnay, and Orane Démazis.
March 12: "Aguirre, the Wrath of God" (1972; Werner Herzog; in German); and "Stroszek" (1977; Werner Herzog; in German and English), with Bruno S. and Eva Mattes.
March 13: "Monkey Business" (†); and "I Was a Male War Bride" (1949; Howard Hawks), with Cary Grant and Ann Sheridan.
March 14: "Being There" (†) and "California Split" (†).
March 15: "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town" (†); and "The Talk of the Town" (1942; George Stevens), with Cary Grant, Jean Arthur, and Ronald Colman.
March 16: "Vidas Secas" (1982; Nelson Pereira dos Santos); and "How Tasty Was My Little Frenchman" (1971; Nelson Pereira dos Santos; a Brazilian film, in the Tupi language).
March 17: "The Idiot" (1951; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune; and "The Men Who Tread on the Tiger's Tail" (†).
March 18: "César" (†) and "The Baker's Wife" (†).
March 19: "Ali: Fear Eats the Soul" (1974; Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Brigitte Mira; and "Fox and His Friends" (1976; Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German).

REGENCY, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
March 9: "Luna" (1979; Bernardo Bertolucci), with Jill Clayburgh and Matthew Barry; and "Death in Venice" (1971; Luchino Visconti), with Dirk Bogarde.
March 10-12: "Song Without End" (1960; George Cukor and Charles Vidor), with Dirk Bogarde, Capucine, and Geneviève Page; and "A Song to Remember" (1945; Charles Vidor), with Merle Oberon, Cornel Wilde, and Paul Muni.
March 13-14: "Yes, Giorgio" (1982; Franklin J. Schaffner), with Luciano Pavarotti and Kathryn Harrold; and "That Midnight Kiss" (1949; Norman Taurog), with Kathryn Grayson, José Iturbi, and Mario Lanza.
March 15-16: "Song of Love" (1947; Clarence Brown), with Katharine Hepburn, Paul Henreid, and Robert Walker; and "Tonight We Sing" (1953; Mitchell Leisen), with Ezio Pinza, Roberta Peters, Anne Bancroft, and David Wayne.
March 17-19: "Sweethearts" (†); and "Everybody Does It" (1949; Edmund Goulding), with Paul Douglas and Linda Darnell.

THALIA, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)
March 9: "Ministry of Fear" (1945; Fritz Lang), with Ray Milland, Marjorie Reynolds, and Dan Duryea; "House by the River" (1950; Fritz Lang), with Louis Hayward, Jane Wyatt, Lee Bowman, and Dorothy Patrick; and "Strange Impersonation" (1946; Anthony Mann), with Brenda Marshall and William Gargan.
March 10: "Monty Python Live at the Hol-



lywood Bowl" (1982), a concert film, and "And Now for Something Completely Different" (1972), selected skits from the BBC-TV series "Monty Python's Flying Circus."

March 11-12: "Elisa, Vida Mia" (1977; Carlos Saura; in Spanish), with Fernando Rey and Geraldine Chaplin; and "Cría!" (1977; Carlos Saura; in Spanish), with Geraldine Chaplin and Ana Torrent.

March 13: "Lacombe, Lucien" (†) and "Murmur of the Heart" (†).

March 14: "Eboli" (1980; Francesco Rosi; in Italian), with Gian Maria Volonte.

March 15: "The Day of the Locust" (†) and "The Last Tycoon" (†).

March 16: "The Glass Key" (1942; Stuart Heisler), with Brian Donlevy, Veronica Lake, and Alan Ladd; "The Seventh Victim" (1943; Mark Robson), with Tom Conway, Kim Hunter, and Jean Brooks; and "The Scar" (1948; Steve Sekely), with Joan Bennett and Paul Henreid.

March 17: "Tempest" (†); and "Rosemary's Baby" (1968; Roman Polanski), with Mia Farrow, John Cassavetes, and Ruth Gordon.

March 18-19: "Easy Living" (†) and "The Devil and Miss Jones" (†).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

March 9: "All That Jazz" (1979; Bob Fosse), with Roy Scheider, Jessica Lange, Ann Reinking, and Leland Palmer; and "The Pajama Game" (1957; George Abbott and Stanley Donen), with Doris Day, John Raitt, Carol Haney, and Eddie Foy.

March 10: "The Man Who Knew Too Much" (1935; Alfred Hitchcock), with Leslie Banks, Edna Best, Pierre Fresnay, and Peter Lorre; and "Secret Agent" (1936; Alfred Hitchcock), with John Gielgud, Peter Lorre, Madeleine Carroll, and Robert Young.

March 11: "The Country Girl" (1954; George Seaton), with Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly, and William Holden; and "To Catch a Thief" (1955, Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Grace Kelly, Jessie Royce Landis, Charles Vanel, and Brigitte Auber.

March 12: "Jamaica Inn" (1939; Alfred Hitchcock), with Charles Laughton, Emlyn Williams, and Maureen O'Hara; and "Shadow of a Doubt" (1942; Alfred Hitchcock), with Teresa Wright, Joseph Cotten, Patricia Collinge, Hume Cronyn, and Henry Travers.

March 13: "La Dolce Vita" (1960; Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni and Anita Ekberg.

March 14: "Bonnie and Clyde" (†) and "The Left Handed Gun" (†).

March 15: "Gaslight" (1944; George Cukor), with Charles Boyer, Ingrid Bergman, Joseph Cotten, Angela Lansbury, and Dame May Whitty; and "The Visit" (1964; Bernhard Wicki), with Ingrid Bergman, Anthony Quinn, and Irina Demick.

March 16: "Horse Feathers" (†) and "The Big Store" (†).

March 17: "42nd Street" (1933; Lloyd Bacon), with Bebe Daniels, Ruby Keeler, Dick Powell, and Warner Baxter; and "Dancing Lady" (1933; Robert Z. Leonard), with Fred Astaire, Joan Crawford, Franchot Tone, and Clark Gable.

March 18-19: "Casablanca" (1942; Michael Curtiz), with Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman, and Claude Rains; and "The Maltese Falcon" (1941; John Huston), with Mary Astor, Humphrey Bogart, Sydney Greenstreet, Elisha Cook, Jr., and Peter Lorre.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Auditorium II, 18 W. 54th St. (708-9490)—March 10 at 2:30. "Le Fantôme du Moulin Rouge" (1925; directed by René Clair; a French silent film, with English inter-titles), with Albert Préjean.... ¶ March 10 at 6 and March 11 at 2:30: "L'Affiche" (1924; Jean Epstein; a French silent film, with French and Flemish inter-titles), with Nathalie Lissenko.... ¶ March 11 at 6: A program of recent Hungarian animated films.... ¶ March 12 at noon: "Citizen Kane" (1941; Orson Welles) with Welles, Joseph Cotten, Dorothy Comingore, and Agnes Moorehead.... ¶ March 12 at 2:30: "Autour de l'Argent" (1927; Jean Drêville; in French); "La P'tite Lilie" (1927; Alberto Cavalcanti; a French silent film), with Catherine Hessling and Jean Renoir; and "En Rade" (1927; Alberto Cavalcanti; a French silent film, with French inter-titles), with Catherine Hessling.... ¶ March 12 at 5: "L'Argent" (1927; Marcel L'Herbier; a French silent film, with French inter-titles), with Pierre Alcover, Brigitte Helm, Alfred Abel, Yvette Guilbert, and Antonin Artaud.... ¶ March 13 at noon: "Citizen Kane."... ¶ March 13 at 2:30: "La Glace à Trois Faces" (1927; Jean Epstein; a French silent film, with French inter-titles); and "Finis Terrae" (1929; Jean Epstein; a French film, with no titles).... ¶ March 13 at 5: "Le Fantôme du Moulin Rouge."... ¶ March 14 at 2:30: "Le Miracle des Loups" (1924; Raymond Bernard; a French silent film, with French inter-titles), with Charles Dullin, Philippe Hériat, and Gaston Modot.... ¶ March 14 at 6: "The Bad and the Beautiful" (1967) and "Noblesse Oblige" (1981), both films directed by Warren Sonbert, who will be present.... ¶ March 15 at 2:30: "Autour de l'Argent," "La P'tite Lilie," and "En Rade."... ¶ March 15 at 6: "La Frontera" (1982; Victoria Schultz) and "Todos Santos Cuchumatan" (1982; Olivia Carrescia).... ¶ March 17 at 2: "L'Argent.".... ¶ March 17 at 6: "Le Miracle des Loups."... ¶ March 18 at 2:30: "La Glace à Trois Faces" and "Finis Terrae."... ¶ March 18 at 6: "La Chute de la Maison Usher" (1928; Jean Epstein; a French silent film, with French inter-titles), with Marguerite Gance and Jean Debucourt; and "Mor'Vran" (1931; Jean Epstein; in French, with no titles)... ¶ March 19 at noon: "The Dancing Pirate" (1936; Lloyd Corrigan), with Charles Collins, Frank Morgan, and Steffi Duna.... ¶ March 19 at 2:30: "Le Tournoi" (1928; Jean Renoir; a French silent film, with French inter-titles).... ¶ March 19 at 5: "Tire-au-Flanc" (1928; Jean Renoir; a French silent film, with French inter-titles), with Michel Simon and Jeanne Helbling. (A limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—Through March 13: "He Saw Her Burning" (1982; Joan Jonas), a video installation. Continuous showings noon to 6. Miss Jonas will perform, as part of the installation, on Friday, March 11, at 3 and 6:30, and Saturday and Sunday, March 12-13, at 3. For tickets, call 570-3617. Closed Mondays.

Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. (874-1717)—A film version of the Puccini opera "Tosca" (1960), with Maria Caniglia, Franco Corelli, and Afro Poli; in Italian. (Sunday, March 13, at 4 and 7. Tickets are available at the theatre between 11 A.M. and 7 P.M. on the day of the performance.)

New Directors/New Films—The first programs in a fourteen-day festival presented by the Film Society of Lincoln Center and the Department of Film of the Museum of Modern Art. At the 57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th St.—March 18 at 6: "A Question of Silence" (The Netherlands; Marleen Gorris).... ¶ March 18 at 8:30: "Wild Style" (United States; Charlie Ahearn).... ¶ March 19 at 1: "A Question of Silence."... ¶ March 19 at 3:30: "Wild Style."... ¶ March 19 at 6: "Irezumi—Spirit of Tattoo" (Japan; Yoichi Takabayashi).... ¶ March 19 at 8:30: "...And God Created Them" (Puerto Rico; Jacobo Morales). (For information about tickets, call 877-1800, Ext. 489.)

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

The Baker's Wife (1938)—The village baker (Raimu) cannot work because he laments his wife's departure with a stupid, sexy shepherd; the villagers, who want their bread, organize to bring her back. Raimu's baker is an acting classic—a true tragicomic hero—and it's easy to agree with Orson Welles, who cited this comedy as proof that "a story and an actor both superb," can result in "a perfect movie" even if the direction and the editing are not "cinematic." Marcel Pagnol, a playwright who turned scenarist and then writer-director, adapted this classic of cuckoldry from Jean Giono's "Jean le Bleu" and directed it very simply. With Ginette Leclerc (who can pout with her mouth open) as the wife; Charpin; and Charles Moulin. In French. (Metro Cinema; March 18.)

Being There (1979)—Outstanding performances by Peter Sellers (as a moronic, TV-addicted gardener who accidentally rises to high places because of the inattention and wishful inanity of the people around him), Melvyn Douglas (as a lonely, sentimental, death-haunted multimillionaire), and Shirley MacLaine (as the old man's wife) are the best things in this adaptation of Jerzy Kosinski's brusquely satiric novel. The picture, which has gained depth and character because of Hal Ashby's thoughtful direction, is frequently comic, but Mr. Kosinski's heartless joke runs thin over the course of two hours, leaving one emotionally flattened in the end. (Metro Cinema; March 14.)

The Big Store (1941)—The Marx Brothers take over a department store. But they never quite take over the movie, which is far from inspired, though it does have Margaret Dumont and that great slimy villain Douglass Dumbrille. Directed by Charles Reisner; from a script by Sid Kuller, Hal Fimberg, and Ray Golden. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 16.)

Bonnie and Clyde (1967)—A landmark movie, this account of the lives of the thirties outlaws Bonnie Parker (Faye Dunaway) and Clyde Barrow (Warren Beatty) keeps the audience in a kind of eager, nervous imbalance; it holds our attention by throwing our disbelief back in our faces. In a sense, it's the absence of sadism—it is the violence without sadism—that throws the audience off balance. The brutality that comes out of the innocent "just folks" Barrow-family gang is far more shocking than the calculated brutalities of mean killers. And there is a kind of American poetry in a stickup gang seen chasing across the bedraggled backdrop of the Depression—as if crime were the only activity in a country stupefied by poverty. Arthur Penn directed, from a screenplay by David Newman and Robert Benton, with some rewriting by Robert Towne (who is credited as Special Consultant). With Gene Hackman, Estelle Parsons, Michael J. Pollard, Gene Wilder, Denver Pyle, Dub Taylor, and Evans Evans. Cinematography by Burnett Guffey; editing by Dede Allen; art direction by Dean Tavoularis; music by Charles Strouse. Produced by Warren Beatty. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 14.)

Das Boot (1982; "The Boat")—If you want to learn about the tedium of life in a German submarine, this is the movie that will give it to you—you're trapped for two and a half hours in a Second World War U-boat that's ten feet wide by a hundred and fifty feet long. And with men who have the same kind of anti-war nobility that the men had in American submarine epics of the fifties. (About ten minutes in, you may feel that you've already seen this picture.) It even has the same kind of heroic man-of-few-words-but-strong-deep-feelings captain (Jurgen Prochnow). The camera keeps moving, yet the whole feeling is claustrophobic—the movement of the camera (deliberately) calls *more* attention to how cramped everything is. (The color is off-putting at first, if you're used to seeing this kind of footage in black and white.) The director, Wolfgang Petersen, did the adaptation of the best-selling autobiographical novel by Lothar-Günther Buchheim, a former war correspondent. The set was constructed at the Bavarian Studios in Munich. The movie "Das Boot" (being shown here) is in German; the dubbed-into-English version is called "The Boat." (68th St. Playhouse; through March 10.)

California Split (1974)—Robert Altman's beautiful, smoky, funny film about gambling, with Elliott Gould as a retaliatory-minded joker and George Segal as a magazine writer with something clenched about him. The film seems to be being improvised; we catch at events and personalities by the ends of threads. The sound track of Joseph Walsh's first-rate screenplay is full of murmurs and densely packed with talk, recorded on eight tracks, often with eleven mikes going at once. A comic, loose-limbed film, with a kindly eye for the out-of-step. (Metro Cinema; March 14.)

César (1936)—The last film of the Marcel Pagnol trilogy (after "Marius" and "Fanny") is named for the pivotal character, played by Raimu. César, the proprietor of a waterfront bar—and the soul of the trilogy—is the father of Marius (Pierre Fresnay), who runs off to sea, leaving his fiancée, Fanny (Orane Démazis), pregnant. She marries the middle-aged, kind sailmaker Panisse (Charpin). In this concluding film—the only one of the three actually directed by Pagnol—Marius and Fanny are at last reunited. Pagnol wrote the story for the stage in the twenties, and, despite the Marseilles setting, the films are very literal-minded and constricted. But the actors redeem much of the pedestrian filmmaking. After Raimu's death, J. B. Priestley wrote, "We can magically command him to return out of those flat tins of film, and show us again his rich humanity and massive, deliberate art. . . . The French should erect a monument to the memory of this player, who reminded us that France had known a Rabelais, a Molière, a Balzac." (There was a 1938 American version, "Port of Seven Seas," with Wallace Beery at his most offensively "human" as César, and a Broadway-musical version, "Fanny," was filmed in 1961, retaining the score only as background music, with a miscast Charles Boyer as César.) In French. (Metro Cinema; March 18.)

Coup de Torchon (Clean Slate)—Bertrand Tavernier's film is set in some sort of French colonial Dogpatch in Africa, in 1938, and it stars Philippe Noiret as a cuckolded weakling who is jeered at by the brutal white men who exploit the natives. He is also the only officer of the law in the area, and he secretly kills off the exploiters, using his reputation for being cowardly and ineffectual as a cover. The movie is torpid even in the early sequences that aim at sly farce, and its thesis is that even such drastic and half-mad cleanup jobs are hopeless. Tavernier may think he's bringing out the rage behind despair, but all he brings out is his sense of futility. The film chokes on its own unresolvable ambiguities. With Isabelle Huppert, who frisks about nakedly and amusingly, and Jean-Pierre Marielle, Stéphane Audran, Guy Marchand, Eddy Mitchell, Samba Mane, Abdoulaye Diop, and Irene Skobline. The script, by Jean Aurenche and Tavernier, is based on the American pulp novel "Pop. 1280," by Jim Thompson, which was set in the American South. In French. (Reviewed in our issue of 1/24/83.) (Quad Cinema. . . . ¶ D. W. Griffith; through March 10.)

The Damned (1969)—Luchino Visconti's view of the depravity in the Third Reich—grandiose, lurid, sluggish. The Nazis are rotten, scheming degenerates; green lights play on their faces, and they look like werewolves talking politics. When the young hero's impersonation of Marlene Dietrich is interrupted by the news that "in Berlin, the Reichstag is burning," he goes into a snit. Visconti is grimly serious about all this curling-lip-and-thin-eyebrow decadence. The centerpiece is the orgy and massacre of Roehm's homosexual Brown Shirts, with gorgeous boys in black lace panties; he doesn't seem sure what attitude to take, and he stages it immaculately, reverentially. Ingrid Thulin is the fag-hag mother, a Krupp-Borgia baroness who turns her son (Helmut Berger) into a dope-addicted transvestite; he molests little girls and eventually beds down with Mother—which is too much even for her and turns her into a zombie. It's really a story about a good boy who loves his wicked mother, and how she emasculates him and makes him decadent—the basic mother-son romance of homoerotic literature, dressed up in Nazi drag. With Dirk Bogarde, Helmut Griem, Charlotte Rampling, Florinda Bolkan, and Umberto Orsini. Though some of the actors speak their own English, this version of "The Damned" has all the disadvantages of a dubbed movie—everything sounds stilted and slightly off. The characters talk in a language that belongs to no period or country and sounds like translated subtitles. (Cinema Village; March 13-15.)

The Day of the Locust (1975)—John Schlesinger's overblown version of Nathanael West's novel is a mosaic that never comes together. Waldo Salt attempted the next-to-impossible job of adapting the novel—an aesthete's view of society, set in Los Angeles in the thirties, in which the culturally debased people bring on the apocalypse. There wouldn't be much to remember from the movie if it weren't for a few of the performers—Burgess Meredith as an old vaudevillian, Billy Barty as a macho dwarf, and William Atherton in the thankless role of the artist Tod. With Karen Black, Donald Sutherland, Geraldine Page, Lelia Goldoni, Richard A. Dysart, and Bo Hopkins. Cinematography by Conrad Hall; production design by Richard MacDonald. (Thalia; March 15.)

The Devil and Miss Jones (1941)—This ambitious but obvious comedy has a reputation because it's vaguely about the relation of capital and labor. Charles Coburn plays "the richest man in the world," a stuffy old grouch who goes to work as a shoe clerk in a department store he happens to own in order to do a little spying on the employees, who are organizing a union. This being a Hollywood romance, he comes to share the employees' grievances, and is humanized so rapidly that he goes on strike against himself. Jean Arthur is appealing enough as the working-girl heroine, but her antics seem forced, and she's not at her best (who is?) with Robert Cummings; he plays her boyfriend, the union organizer. With Edmund Gwenn as a nasty department head, Spring Byington, William Demarest, and S. Z. Sakall. Directed by Sam Wood, from a script by Norman Krasna; the production was designed by William Cameron Menzies. (Thalia; March 18-19.)

Diva—An up-to-the-minute romantic thriller from France, made by a new director, Jean-Jacques Beineix, who has a fabulous camera technique and understands the pleasures to be had from a picture that doesn't take itself too seriously. The diva is an awesomely beautiful black American soprano (Wilhelmenia Fernandez) who refuses to make recordings. Frédéric Andrei is the wide-eyed eighteen-year-old postal messenger who adores her; he sneaks his Nagra tape machine into her concert in Paris so he'll be able to listen to her at home—and all hell breaks loose around him. The unfazable heroine (the fourteen-year-old Thuy An Luu) is a post-Godardian tootsie—in her short-short skirts and transparent plastic coat she's a lollipop wrapped in cellophane. The film may remind you of Welles' "Touch of Evil;" it's Welles romanticized, packaged. It's a mixture of style and chic hanky-panky, but it's genuinely sparkling. In French. (4/19/82) (Cinema Studio.)

East of Eden (1955)—An amazingly high-strung, feverishly poetic movie about Cain and Abel as American brothers living on a lettuce farm in California in the years just before the First World War. Elia Kazan directed this adaptation of Steinbeck's novel, and it's like seeing a series of teasers: violent moments and charged scenes without much coherence. As the romantic, alienated young hero, James Dean is decorated with all sorts of charming gaucheries; he's sensitive, defenseless, hurting. Maybe his father (Raymond Massey) doesn't love him, but the camera does, and we're supposed to; we're thrust into upsetting angles, caught in infatuated closeups, and prodded—"Look at all that beautiful desperation." When this Cain strikes his brother (Richard Davalos), the soundtrack amplifies the blow as if worlds were colliding; a short, heavy dose of Expressionism may be followed by a pastoral romp or an elaborate bit of Americana; an actor may suddenly assume a psychotic stance and another actor shatter a train window with his head. It's far from a dull movie, but it's certainly a very strange one; it's an enshrinement of the mixed-up kid. Here and in "Rebel Without a Cause," Dean seems to go just about as far as anybody can in acting misunderstood. With Julie Harris, who gives a memorably lyric performance, and Burl Ives, Jo Van Fleet, Albert Dekker, Lois Smith, Barbara Baxley,

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Timothy Carey, Jonathan Haze, Mario Siletti, Harold Gordon, Lonny Chapman, and Nick Dennis. Script by Paul Osborn; cinematography by Ted McCord; music by Leonard Rosenman. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 2; March 18-19.)

Easy Living (1937)—One of the most agreeable of the romantic slapstick comedies of the thirties, and full of surprises. Jean Arthur is the working girl whose life is completely changed when a sable coat, thrown out a millionaire's window, lands on her head. The movie is a wonderful fluke: the script by Preston Sturges is in his manic, everybody-with-something-to-say style; the director, Mitchell Leisen (once De Mille's art director), tempered it with smooth takes and elegant clothes and sets, including a lily-shaped bathtub. The film has impish, sweet moments (such as the half-asleep heroine's delayed reaction after a kiss from the hero—Ray Milland) and at least one classic slapstick sequence (the little glass doors in an Automat fly open and people lunge for the free food). With Edward Arnold (a little louder than necessary—that was always his vice), and Mary Nash, William Demarest, Luis Alberni, Franklin Pangborn, and Esther Dale. From a story by Vera Caspary. (Thalia; March 18-19.)

E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial—Steven Spielberg's movie is bathed in warmth and it seems to clear all the bad thoughts out of your head. It's the story of a ten-year-old boy, Elliott, who feels fatherless and lost because his parents have separated, and who finds a miraculous friend—an alien inadvertently left on Earth by a visiting spaceship. This fusion of science fiction and mythology is emotionally rounded and complete; it reminds you of the goofiest dreams you had as a kid, and rehabilitates them. It puts a spell on the audience; it's genuinely entrancing. The stars are Henry Thomas, as Elliott, and E.T., who was designed by Carlo Rambaldi. With Drew Barrymore, Robert Macnaughton, Dee Wallace, and Peter Coyote. The script is by Melissa Mathison. (6/14/82) (Loews New York Twin, and Movieland.)

48 Hrs.—Walter Hill's fast and brutal action comedy is a roller coaster that hurtles along. Nick Nolte is a San Francisco police detective and Eddie Murphy (making his movie début) is a young hipster thief who outsmarts him by his hustler's verbal finesse and his black man's sense of irony. The two set out as brawling and cursing enemies and, of course, become gaffawing pals; the racial infighting is what gives the film its charge. It's like "The French Connection," "Dirty Harry," "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid," and a half-dozen other films all put in a compactor, smashed, and pressed into cartoon form. With Annette O'Toole, Frank McRae, James Remar, Sonny Landham, Brion James, Olivia Brown, David Patrick Kelly, and the Busboys. (1/10/83) (34th St. East, Baronet, Embassy 1, and Embassy.)

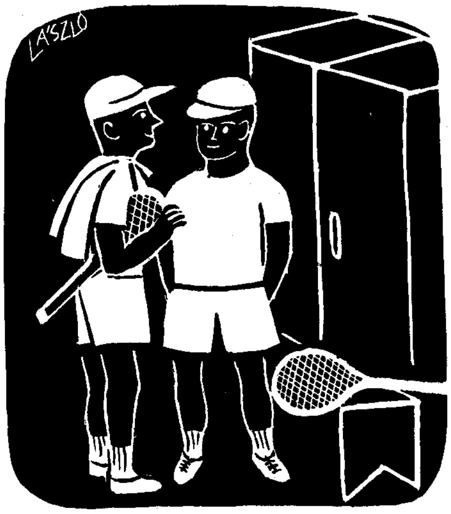
Gandhi—A biographical epic, directed by Richard Attenborough, whose sensibility is conventional. Spanning fifty-five years, the picture covers some of the principal events in Gandhi's public life and tidies up his rather kinky domestic relations. Gandhi goes by in a cloud of serenity, and everyone who sees him knuckles under (with the exception of a few misguided fellows, of course). Ben Kingsley, who plays the Mahatma, looks the part, has a fine, quiet presence, and conveys Gandhi's shrewdness. Kingsley is impressive; the picture isn't. The first half builds up considerable interest in Gandhi; the second half is scattered—as if it had been added to or subtracted from at random. From a script by John Briley. (3 hours, 8 minutes.) (12/27/82) (Ziegfeld.)

Hester Street (1975)—A modest comedy about the assimilation process among a group of Russian-Jewish immigrants living on the lower East Side in 1896. Independently made, this first feature by the writer-director Joan Micklin Silver begins lamely, but it wins one over. Carol Kane is lovely as the timid, pious, rejected wife of a sweatshop worker who has broken away from the Old World traditions she represents. Mel Howard plays Bernstein, the scholarly boarder who loves her. Its weaknesses are in the casting and the handling of the aggressive characters, and in the thin, audience-pleasing attitudes toward the Americanization process. With Steven Keats, as the husband, and Dorrie Kavanaugh. (St. Marks Cinema; through March 10.)

The Honeymoon Killers (1970)—Based on the lives of the multiple murderers Martha Beck and Raymond Fernandez, who met their victims through Lonely Hearts clubs, and who were put to death at Sing Sing in 1951. This low-budget black-and-white movie is so literal-minded that it resembles a *True Detective* account of the case; it's as if someone recreated the Grade Z pictures of the forties and did so in absolute seriousness. The movie goes through the chronicle of the Beck-Fernandez crimes with pedestrian relentlessness; it's paced as if the actors were walking in lockstep. After the almost incredible lack of depth of the first half hour, the film begins to acquire a fascination *because* of its total superficiality—it becomes something resembling Minimal art. The writer-director, Leonard Kastle, whose first picture this was, keeps the images so brightly lighted and so exactly planned and worked out that every ugly detail is in place—the hammer blow on the head, the trickle of blood, the ludicrous tongues sticking out of dead faces. As the two-hundred-pound Martha Beck, Shirley Stoler is much too shrill at the start but quiets down and improves as the movie plods on; as the sleazy charmer Ray Fernandez, Tony Lo Bianco is alarmingly authentic to the pulpy genre. The women victims include Marilyn Chris, Barbara Cason, and Mary Jane Higby. The film uses music by Gustav Mahler. (Little Theatre, Public Theatre; through March 13.)

Horse Feathers (1932)—The Marx Brothers in one of their niftiest corny-surreal comedies; it isn't in the class of their "Duck Soup," but then what else is? The setting is academic, with emphasis on football; Groucho is Prof. Wagstaff, the new president of Huxley College, who explains his policy and plans in the song "Whatever It Is, I'm Against It," and Thelma Todd is the college widow to whom all four Brothers make overtures. So there's some naughty sense to it when Groucho sings the picture's theme song to her, "Everyone Says 'I Love You!' " Norman McLeod directed for Paramount from a screenplay by Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby (who also wrote the songs) and S. J. Perelman and Will B. Johnstone. With Robert Greig as the solemn-voiced biology professor, David Landau as the villain, and Nat Pendleton. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 16.)

The King of Comedy—Robert De Niro plays Rupert Pupkin, a grossly insensitive, cold-hearted deadhead who is determined to become a TV star like his idol, the comic Jerry Langford, played by Jerry Lewis. The director, Martin Scorsese, must have decided to give us the cold creeps; the shots are held so long that we look for more in them than is there. Scorsese designs his own form of alienation in this mistimed, empty movie, which seems to teeter between jokiness and hate. It's "The Day of the Locust" in the age of television, but with a druggy vacuousness that suggests the Warhol productions of the sixties. With Sandra Bernhard as the hysterical Masha, who helps Pupkin kidnap Langford. (Pupkin's ransom demand is a ten-minute guest appearance on Langford's late-night talk show.) Also with Diahnne Abbott as the bartender Rita and Shelley Hack as a secretary. From a script by Paul Zimmerman. (3/7/83) (Coronet.)



Lacombe, Lucien, (1974)—About a boy who has an empty space where feelings beyond the purely instinctual are expected to be. The time is 1944, and the boy—a French peasant—goes to work each day hunting down and torturing people for the Gestapo. The director, Louis Malle, casts as Lucien a teenage country boy (Pierre Blaise) who can respond to events with his own innocence, apathy, and animal shrewdness. Malle's gamble is that the cameras will discover what the artist's imagination can't, and, steadily, startlingly, the gamble pays off. Without ever mentioning the subject of innocence and guilt, this extraordinary film, in its calm, dispassionate way, addresses it on a very deep level. With Aurore Clément as a Parisian Jewish girl, Holger Löwenadler as her punctilious, cultivated father, Thérèse Giehse as her grandmother, and Gilberte Rivet as the boy's mother. The script is by Malle and Patrick Modiano. In French. (Thalia; March 13.)

The Last Tycoon (1976)—Harold Pinter adapted Fitzgerald's unfinished novel about Hollywood, and Elia Kazan directed the picture, which was produced by Sam Spiegel and stars Robert De Niro as the artist-businessman Monroe Stahr. The result is so enervated that it's like a vampire movie after the vampires have left. De Niro gives an authentic interpretation of a New York-Jewish Hollywood intellectual giant of the thirties, but he might be acting under a blanket. He stands around waiting while Ingrid Boulting, who plays Kathleen, loiters over inane remarks. (Of all Fitzgerald's implausible heroines, Kathleen—the runaway mistress of a European king—is the most vaporous.) Probably the first mistake was to approach the book cap in hand, and the next was to hire Pinter; the film needed a writer who would fill in what's missing—Pinter's art is the art of taking away. With Jack Nicholson, Robert Mitchum, Jeanne Moreau, Ray Milland, Donald Pleasence, Theresa Russell, Dana Andrews, and Tony Curtis—the only one who shows any vitality. (Thalia; March 15.)

The Left Handed Gun (1958)—Arthur Penn's first film, adapted by Leslie Stevens from a television play by Gore Vidal, has some of the violent, legendary, nostalgic qualities of his later "Bonnie and Clyde." A young, great-looking Paul Newman plays Billy the Kid as an ignorant boy in the sex-starved Old West. There's a foreshadowing of the sensibility that shaped "Bonnie and Clyde" when Billy's shotgun blasts a man right out of one of his boots. The man falls in the street, but his boot remains upright; a little girl starts to giggle at the boot and doesn't get very far—her mother slaps her, and that slap is the seal of the awareness of horror. It says that even children must learn that some things that look funny are not only funny. It says that only idiots would laugh at pain and death. The slap is itself funny, and yet we suck in our breath; we don't dare to laugh. With Hurd Hatfield, Lita Milan, John Dehner, Denver Pyle, Nestor Paiva, John Dierkes, and James Congdon. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 14.)

Lovesick—Among the many psychoanalyst characters are the hero Dudley Moore, his crony Wallace Shawn, and Selma Diamond, John Huston, Alan King, Stefan Schnabel, Richard B. Shull, and Alec Guinness (as the shade of a trim, urbane Sigmund Freud). The writer-director, Marshall Brickman, has a dapper, weird precision of tone that's funny, and he starts with a promising (if flimsy) situation: Moore inherits a patient, a young

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playwright (Elizabeth McGovern), from Shawn, who has fallen in love with her and died of guilt; of course, Moore falls in love with her, too. But Brickman's attention seems to wander away, and the dramatic tension dribbles out. The film's tasteful sprightliness keeps it from being about anything, but there are some terrific comedy performances by Anne DeSalvo, Kent Broadhurst, David Strathairn, Gene Saks, and Renée Taylor. Also with the painter Larry Rivers, his great-bird head held high, as a painter, and Ron Silver as a Hollywood star who resembles Al Pacino. (3/7/83) (Gemini, and R.K.O. Century National Twin. . . . ¶ Loews 83rd Quad; through March 10. . . . ¶ Murray Hill; through March 17.)

The Men Who Tread on the Tiger's Tail (1945)—An hour-long film by Kurosawa. The Japanese government wanted a propaganda film when they commissioned him to film a popular Kabuki drama called "Kanjincho." What they got was a funny fable about militarism, with a nice low-comedy porter who upstages the stoic noblemen of the original. In Japanese. (Metro Cinema; March 17.)

Missing (1982)—Making his first American movie, Costa-Gavras uses the same approach that American directors have often used when they wanted to teach us something: he has given his accusatory political thriller a soft, warm-and-human center. As the businessman Ed Horman, the father of a young American who had disappeared in Chile during the days after the military coup that overthrew Allende, Jack Lemmon is playing a variant of the role that Jane Fonda has been playing in films such as "Coming Home" and "The China Syndrome;" he's the naïve, protected, nonpolitical conservative who is radicalized (or, at least, reëducated) by what he learns. And Lemmon is so eager to have depth that he looks on a serious role as a chance for redemption; Ed arrives in Santiago to look for his son and we're stuck, observing each step in the calibrated process of his coming closer to the counterculture values of his son's wife (Sissy Spacek, who's fresh and natural). Costa-Gavras's antipathy to Americans appears to be so deep-seated that he can't create American characters. The only real filmmaking is in the backgrounds: in the anxious, ominous atmosphere of a city under martial law—the sirens, the tanks, the helicopters, the feeling of abnormal silences and of random terror. With John Shea as Charles, the son (seen in flashbacks), and Melanie Mayron. Based on the book by Thomas Hauser; shot in Mexico. (3/8/82) (Gemini, U. A. 85th St. East, Olympia Quad, and R.K.O. Century National Twin; through March 10.)

Mr. Deeds Goes to Town (1936)—Frank Capra-style folk humor is better in slightly shorter doses (this runs almost two hours and the pace could be quicker), but there's no use fighting one's enjoyment of his homey fantasy demonstrating the triumph of small-town values over big-city cynicism. Gary Cooper (Longfellow Deeds) is the sincere greeting-card poet from New England who comes to New York; Jean Arthur is the wiseacre newspaperwoman who starts out by making a public joke of him and then falls in love with him. The film culminates in a courtroom sequence that introduced the word "pixilated" to just about every American home, and set people to examining one another's casual scribbles or sketches—their "doodles." Robert Riskin adapted the Clarence Budington Kelland *SatEvePost* story "Opera Hat." The cast includes George Bancroft, Lionel Stander, Douglass Dumbrille, Ruth Donnelly, Emma Dunn, Raymond Walburn, Warren Hymer, Walter Catlett, Mayo Methot, and Jameson Thomas as the twitcher. Capra took the Academy Award for Best Director. (Metro Cinema; March 15.)

Mr. Hulot's Holiday (1953)—People are at their most desperate when they are working at enjoying themselves; it is Jacques Tati's peculiar comic triumph to have caught the ghastliness of a summer vacation at the beach. Fortunately, his technique is light and dry slapstick; the chronicle of human foibles and frustrations never sinks to the moist or the lovable. As director, co-author, and star, Tati is sparse, eccentric, quick. It is not until afterward—with the sweet, nostalgic music lingering—that these misadventures may take on a certain depth and poignancy. In French. (57th St. Playhouse; March 11-17.)

Monkey Business (1952)—Grating screwball farce. As a middle-aged professor who drinks a rejuvenating potion, Cary Grant is required to act frolicsomely juvenile; it's painful to see him playing cowboys and Indians with a bunch of kids. As his wife, who also swigs the potion, Ginger Rogers is reduced to thumb-sucking infantilism, and she gives a nightmarishly busy performance. This boisterous, labored whimsy, which also features Marilyn Monroe and Charles Coburn, was scripted by Ben Hecht, I. A. L. Diamond, and Charles Lederer from a story by Harry Segall, and was directed by Howard Hawks. With Hugh Marlowe, Larry Keating, Esther Dale, and George Wilson, the little boy with the foghorn voice. (Metro Cinema; March 13.)

Murmur of the Heart (1971)—Louis Malle's exhilarating high comedy about French bourgeois life. He looks into his own back yard—the film is set in Dijon in 1954 at the time of Dien Bien Phu, and it's about the sex education of fourteen-year-old Laurent (Benoit Ferreux), the youngest, brightest son of a successful gynecologist (Daniel Gélin) and his Italian-born wife (Léa Massari). Malle sees not only the prudent, punctilious surface but the volatile and slovenly life underneath. His bourgeois bestiary is funny and appalling and also—surprisingly—hardy and happy. This is perhaps the first time on film that anyone has shown us the bourgeoisie enjoying its privileges. Though the movie itself reveals the sources of Malle's humor, this story probably wouldn't have been nearly so funny or, perhaps, so affectionate if Malle had told it fifteen years earlier. Massari is superb, as Clara, the carelessly sensual mother; Clara is shamelessly loose and free, and she's loved by her sons because of her indifference to the bourgeois forms, which they nevertheless accept—on the surface, that is. The story moves toward its supremely logical yet imaginative conclusion so stealthily that the kicker joke is perfect. With Michel Lonsdale as Father Henri. The script is by Malle. In French. (Thalia; March 13.)

My Favorite Year—The year is 1954, when Sid Caesar was the king of live TV comedy, and this movie is a fictional treatment of life backstage during the days when many soon-to-be-famous writers worked on his shows, brainstorming together. As the brawny, truculent King Kaiser, Joe Bologna suggests an introverted ox, and Peter O'Toole is King's guest star from Hollywood—the notorious womanizing boozer Alan Swann, who is part John Barrymore and part Errol Flynn. Bologna has an authentic boss-comic aura, and O'Toole plays Swann with a funky daring that is simply astounding. This show-business farce is the first film directed by Richard Benjamin, and it's a creaky job of moviemaking, but it has a bubbling spirit. Bill Macy, Lainie Kazan, Cameron Mitchell, and Anne DeSalvo all have a crack at fresh material. Also with Mark Linn-Baker, Jessica Harper, Selma Diamond, Adolph Green, Lou Jacobi, Tony Di Beneditto, Gloria Stuart, and Basil Hoffman. From a terrific script by Norman Steinberg (who appears in a bit part as Sandy) and Dennis Palumbo. (10/4/82) (Gramercy. . . . ¶ Olympia Quad, and Embassy; through March 10.)

The Night of the Shooting Stars—In its feeling and completeness, this film by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani may rank close to Jean Renoir's bafflingly beautiful "Grand Illusion." The story is a woman's memories of her adventures as a six-year-old in a Tuscan village and its environs during the summer of 1944, when the American troops were rumored only days away, and the Germans who had held the area under occupation were preparing to clear out—preparations that included mining the houses so they could blow them up. Yet this setting is magical, like a Shakespearean forest, and the woman's account has the quality of folklore and legend, and even its most tragic moments can be dizzyingly comic. With Omero Antonutti as the leader of the group of two or three dozen villagers who sneak away in the night to find the Americans. The script is by the Tavianis and the producer, Giuliani G. De Negri, with the collaboration of Tonino Guerra; the score is by Nicola Piovani; cinematography is by Franco di Giacomo. In Italian. (2/7/83) (Lincoln Plaza.)

An Officer and a Gentleman—This formula romantic melodrama seems to come out of a time warp, but the director, Taylor Hackford, has done a smashing job of making the retrograde love story whiz by. Richard Gere is the tightly wound-up loner who is determined to become a flier; the movie centers on his thirteen-week basic-training ordeal at Naval Aviation Officer Candidate School. Gere has a striking moment when the character cracks, after the tough drill sergeant (Louis Gossett, Jr.) has caught him in some petty chiselling and punished him. But after he has broken down he's still Richard Gere, lost in his own placid beauty. As the mill-worker heroine, Debra Winger brings the film sultriness; you pull for this heroine because her tough-chick little-girl insolence plays off the avid look in her eyes that tells you she longs to make human contact. Gossett plays the sergeant bone hard; it's a beautifully hammy austere performance. There are also impressive characterizations by David Keith and Robert Loggia. With Tony Plana as an officer candidate with a Mohawk haircut and Lisa Eilbacher as a woman candidate. The script is by Douglas Day Stewart. (8/23/82) (72nd Street East, and Embassy. . . . ¶ Guild; starting March 18.)

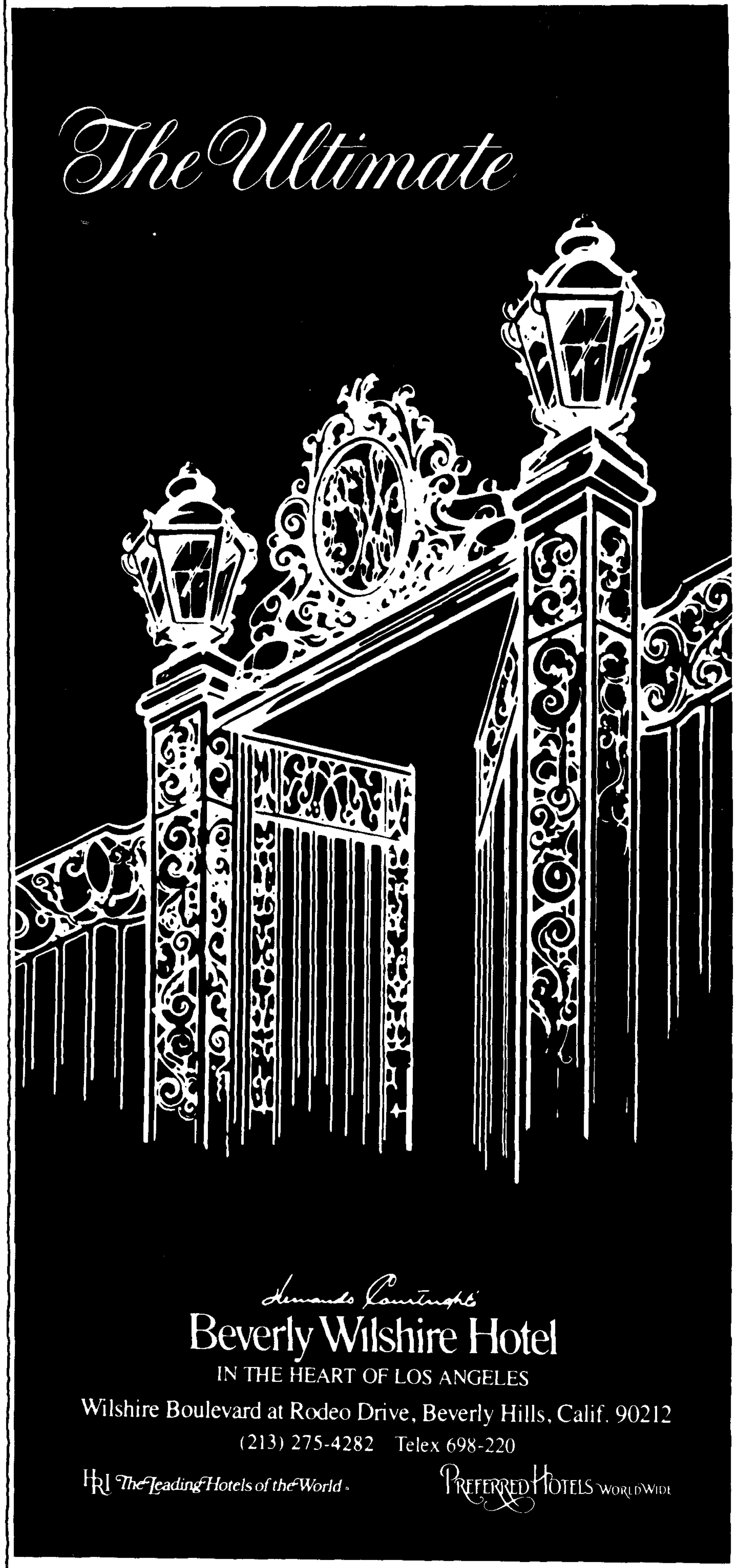
Parsifal—Hans-Jürgen Syberberg's film is thoughtful, inventive, and very ambitious. The musical performance is of high distinction. The visual imagery is arresting, resonant, and colorful. With two young Swiss, Michael Kutter and Karin Krick, in the dual role of Parsifal (the singing is by the Dresden tenor Reiner Goldberg); Edith Clever as Kundry (sung by Yvonne Minton); Robert Lloyd singing and enacting Gurnemanz; and Aage Haugland as Klingsor. The Swiss conductor Armin Jordan, an outstanding Wagnerian, also plays Amfortas (the role is sung by Wolfgang Schone). The Monte Carlo Philharmonic plays with great breadth and beauty of tone and subtlety of solo inflection, and the Prague Philharmonic Choir's singing is firm and full. In German. (2/21/83; under Musical Events.) (Guild; through March 17.)

Playtime (1968)—Jacques Tati's most innovative work. M. Hulot is still here—high-belted trousers, short raincoat, loping walk, as if he were braced to smash a tennis volley—but his importance has receded because Tati's view is that the hero of modern urban life is everybody. He sees something comic in every character in the picture, without ridicule. (57th St. Playhouse; through March 10.)

The Producers (1968)—Zero Mostel as a producer who sells twenty-five thousand per cent of a play, intending to produce a flop so that he won't have to pay the backers anything. Naturally, he produces a hit. Some of the material is funny in an original way, but Mel Brooks, who wrote and directed (both for the first time), doesn't get the timing right and good gags fall apart or become gross or just don't develop. The sequence consisting of tryouts for the role of Hitler in the play, which is called "Springtime for Hitler," is potentially so great that what Brooks does with it lets you down. Still, terrible as this picture is, a lot of it is very enjoyable. For satire of the theatre as inspired as Brooks's gags at their best, it's not hard to put up with the ineptitude and the amateurish camera angles. It's even possible to put up with Zero Mostel in closeup. (He was not an actor who toned down his effects for the camera.) With Dick Shawn, Estelle Winwood, Renée Taylor, Kenneth Mars, and Gene Wilder, whose whining, strangled-voice bit is almost a shtick of genius. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 1; March 17-19.)

Rebel Without a Cause (1955)—As Jim, a high-school boy, James Dean was the archetypal misunderstood teen-ager in this generation-gap soap opera of the fifties, which had more emotional resonance for the teen-agers of the time than many much better movies. With Natalie Wood as Judy, Sal Mineo as Plato, Corey Allen as Buzz, Nick Adams as Moose, Dennis Hopper as Goon, Jim Backus and Ann Doran as Jim's parents, Virginia Brissac as his Grandma, William Hopper and Rochelle Hudson as Judy's parents, and Ian Wolfe, House Peters, and Gus Schilling. Directed by Nicholas Ray; written by Stewart Stern and Irving Shulman, based on Ray's story. Music by Leonard Roseman; cinematography by Ernest Haller. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 2; March 18-19.)

The Road Warrior—Set in a post-apocalyptic Wasteland, this Australian film is a mutant, sprung from virtually all action genres. It's one continuous spurt of energy, and the



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jangly, fast editing suggests wit; so does the broad blacktop highway that cuts across the desert nothingness. And the rampaging vandals—punkish post-nuclear-war bikers, led by a masked bodybuilder called the Humungus—are s-m comic-strip terrors. But the picture is abstract in an adolescent way. Director George Miller's attempt to tap into the universal concept of the hero (as enunciated by Jung and explicated by Joseph Campbell in "The Hero with a Thousand Faces") makes the film joyless. He consciously uses his hero, Max (Mel Gibson), as an icon; that's enough to squeeze the juice out of any actor, and Max seems bland and apathetic. For all its huffing and puffing, this is a sappy, sentimental movie. With Bruce Spence and Vernon Wells; the script is by Terry Hayes and Miller, with Brian Hannant. (9/6/82) (D. W. Griffith; starting March 11.)

Sanjuro (1963)—Toshiro Mifune as the fastest sword in the East, in a mocking melodrama directed by Akira Kurosawa. In Japanese. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 1; March 13-14.)

Sophie's Choice—This unusually faithful adaptation of William Styron's Holocaust Gothic comes to us stuffed with literary references and encrusted with the weighty culture of big themes; evil, tortured souls, guilt. The director, Alan J. Pakula, did the screenplay himself. He didn't write it, he penned it. Meryl Streep is Sophie the Catholic; Kevin Kline is Nathan the mad-genius Jew, who is her lover and tormentor; and Peter MacNicol is Stingo the Protestant, the young heir to Southern chivalry (and stand-in for Styron)—he moves into the Brooklyn house they live in and becomes involved in their sadomasochistic trials. The movie is a novel being talked to us, and it has the kind of plotting that points relentlessly at a character's secret and then has to have the character lying constantly, so that the lies can be stripped away. Meryl Streep is colorful in the first, late-forties scenes, when she does amusing nervous bits of business, like fidgeting with a furry boa—her fingers twiddling with our heartstrings. But when the flashbacks to Sophie's past start up and the delayed revelations are sprung on us, it's apparent that the whole plot is based on a connection that isn't there—the connection between Sophie and Nathan's relationship and what the Nazis did to the Jews. (12/27/82) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Manhattan, 86th St. East, Greenwich Playhouse, Cinema 3, and Criterion Theatres. . . . ¶ Loews 83rd Quad; through March 10.)

Sweethearts (1938)—One of the liveliest of the Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy musicals. The title is ironic; they are squabbling husband-and-wife operetta stars, trading insults written by Dorothy Parker and Alan Campbell. The Parker-Campbell script has nothing to do with the original story of Victor Herbert's 1913 operetta; the songs are retained as part of the long-running show "Sweethearts" that the couple is appearing in. This was M-G-M's first three-color-process Technicolor feature, and it has startling color costuming by Adrian. Directed by W. S. Van Dyke; choreographed by Albertina Rasch. With Ray Bolger, Mischa Auer, Frank Morgan, Allyn Joslyn, Reginald Gardiner, Herman Bing, Florence Rice, Berton Churchill, Terry Kilburn, Lucile Watson, George Barbier, Gene and Kathleen Lockhart, Barbara Pepper, Raymond Walburn, and Jimmy Conlin. (Regency; March 17-19.)

Tempest—Taking off from Shakespeare and the idea of a world-famous American architect of Greek ancestry who is having a mid-life crisis, Paul Mazursky tries for a free, airborne mix of comedy, musical, psychodrama, and dream play. The film has a flickering wit and there are charming bits by Susan Sarandon and the talented young actress Molly Ringwald, but Mazursky doesn't find an original tone that the audience can respond to, and he has put John Cassavetes—one of the most dour and alienating of actors—at the film's center. And worse, the picture has delusions of pain-in-the-soul glamour; set mostly in Manhattan and on a Greek island, it's overblown and luxuriantly elegant. You feel you should ooh and ah the vistas (courtesy of the cinematographer, Don McAlpine). It has the polished pictorial extravagance of stupe classics such as Albert Lewin's 1951 "Pandora and the Flying Dutchman." (It even has the swank blue skies that "Pandora" had.) And it's a sophisticated fantasy in the same mode: the images might be used to advertise a new *parfum*. This is an absurd movie, but what an artifact! It takes a high degree of civilization to produce something so hollow. With Raul Julia, Gena Rowlands, Vittorio Gassman, Lucianne Buchanan, Sam Robards, Paul Stewart, Jackie Gayle, Anthony Holland, Jerry Hardin, and Paul and Betsy Mazursky. From a script by Mazursky and Leon Capetanos; with a modern score by Stomu Yamashta. (9/20/82) (Thalia; March 17.)

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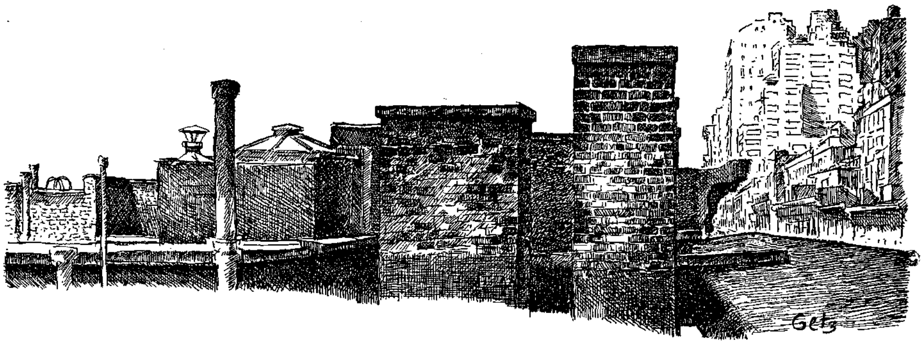
Tootsie—Marvellous fun. Dustin Hoffman plays Michael Dorsey, a brilliant, "uncompromising" New York actor whom no one wants to hire because he makes things hell for everybody. When Michael's girlfriend (Teri Garr) goes up for an audition for a role in a soap and is rejected, he makes himself up as a woman, presents himself as Dorothy Michaels, and lands the job. And Michael finds himself when he's Dorothy—he's such a dedicated, fanatical actor that he comes fully alive only when he's playing a role. Michael is still in the guise of Dorothy when he meets his dream girl—Jessica Lange, who's like a shock absorber to him. With Bill Murray, Charles Durning, George Gaynes, Doris Belack, Dabney Coleman, and, as Michael's agent, Sydney Pollack, who also directed. Pollack does some of his best work yet in the opening sequences—a crackling, rapid-fire presentation of the hopes versus the realities of out-of-work actors' lives. The script is credited to Larry Gelbart and Murray Schisgal, but Don McGuire wrote the first draft, and Elaine May and many others worked on it. (12/27/82) (R.K.O. Century Art, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, and Loews Paramount. . . . ¶ Loews 83rd Quad; through March 10.)

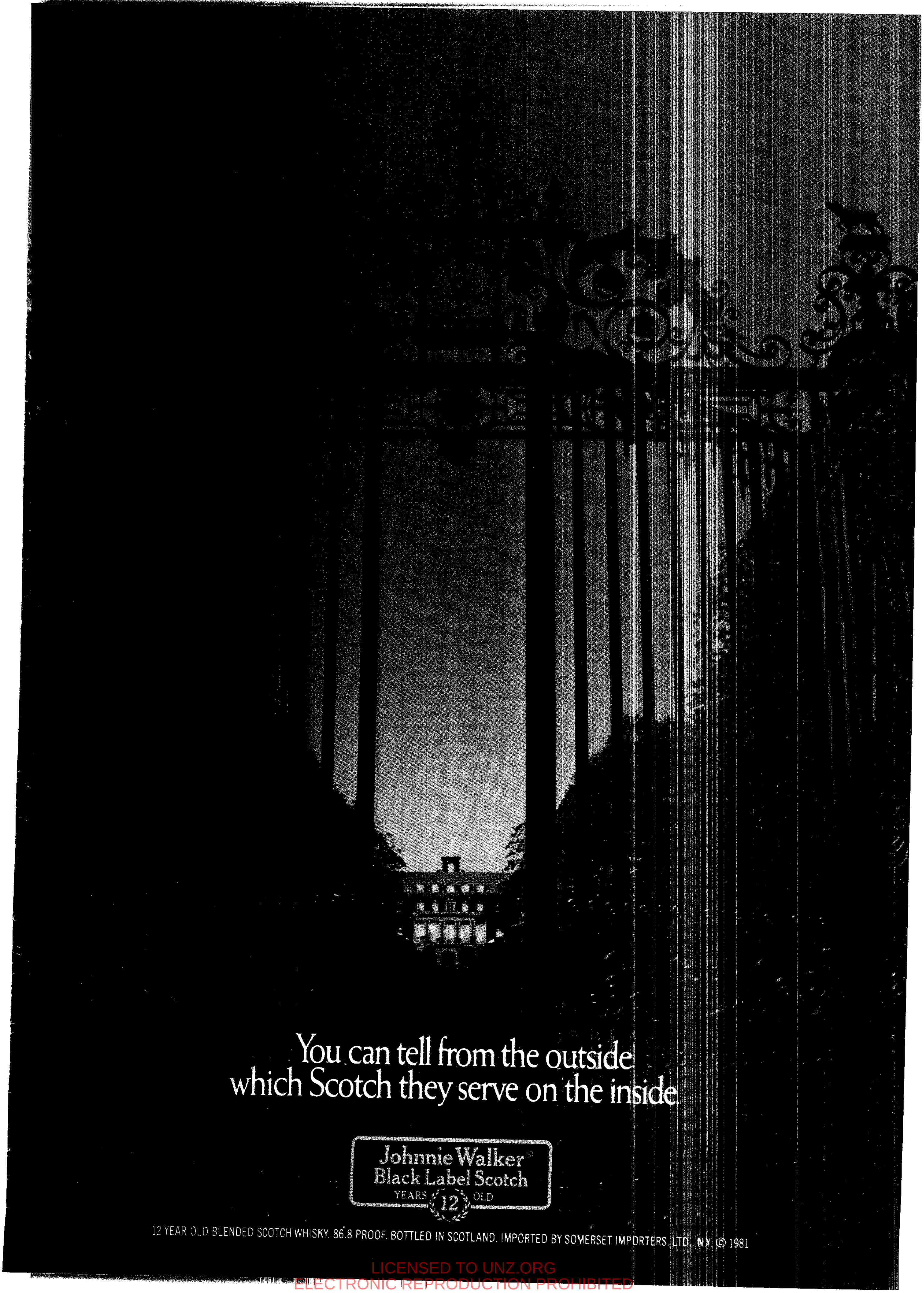
The Verdict—When Sidney Lumet gets serious, his energetic, fast-moving style falls apart. The camera sits like Death on the dark, angled images of this anguished movie about a Boston Irish lawyer, played by Paul Newman, who was hurt by those closest to him and became a booze-soaked failure. When the lawyer goes into court to fight the powerful Archdiocese of Boston, his faith in the judgment of the ordinary people who sit on the jury enables him to redeem himself. It's a Frank Capra setup given art-film treatment. Newman plays his role for all it has got, but it's a tired old show-business view of "a good man." In its own sombre, inflated terms, the picture is effective, but it's dragged out so self-importantly that you have time to recognize what a hopelessly naïve, incompetent, and untrustworthy lawyer the hero is. With Charlotte Rampling, James Mason, Jack Warden, Lindsay Crouse, Milo O'Shea, Edward Binns, Julie Bovasso, Lewis Stadlen, and Wesley Addy. The script, by David Mamet, is based on a novel by Barry Reed. (1/10/83) (Gotham Cinema, New Yorker, and Criterion Theatres.)

Victor/Victoria (1982)—The writer-director Blake Edwards' rough-and-tumble boudoir farce centers on Julie Andrews as Victoria, an English singer stranded in Paris in 1934, who pretends to be a man so that she can get work as a female impersonator. The picture is at its yeastiest in the slapstick embellishments of the preparatory sequences; when the infuriatingly sane and distant Julie Andrews finally gets into men's clothes, there's nothing remotely funny about it. And you don't believe that she could successfully impersonate a woman on the stage. Edwards pulls laughs, though. He does it with the crudest setups and the moldiest, most cynical dumb jokes. This is an audience pleaser in the worst sense. As an aging homosexual entertainer who trains Victoria to pass as Victor, Robert Preston brings an unholy glee to his work. He plays a sentimental stereotype so heartily and likably that he redeems the musty material. (This is yet another movie in which a girl's best friend is a homosexual.) James Garner, with a mustache and acting like a funny, scowly Clark Gable, is a nightclub owner from Chicago, and, as the girlfriend he discards when he falls for Victoria, Lesley Ann Warren, gone blond, does dippy, exaggerated versions of Jean Harlow's nasal petulance. She's a comic-strip eccentric, and you feel her sweetness, but Edwards ties tin cans to her tail—he makes her into a nasty, screeching floozy. This picture features speeches about sexual politics that are the latest in show-biz enlightenment; it also features a chorus line, headed by Lesley Ann Warren, that may be the most contemptuous display of women's bodies ever seen in a major-studio movie. With Alex Karras as Garner's bodyguard. The songs by Henry Mancini and Leslie Bricusse are bland and forgettable. Based on the 1933 German film comedy "Viktor und Viktoria," this is at least the fifth version. (5/3/82) (Gramercy. . . . ¶ Olympia Quad, and Embassy; through March 10.)

The Wanderers (1979)—The Bronx, 1963: dead-end kids vs. adolescent nightmares, to the music of Dion, the Shirelles, etc. A good adaptation, somewhat more upbeat, of the lurid novel by Richard Price. Directed by Philip Kaufman, who wrote the screenplay with Rose Kaufman. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 2; March 16-17.)

The Year of Living Dangerously—Peter Weir's romantic adventure film is set in Indonesia in 1965, during the political upheavals that shook President Sukarno's unstable government, and centers on the Caucasian community of journalists and diplomats in Djakarta. Linda Hunt has the pivotal male role of the goblinlike Billy Kwan, a half-Chinese, half-Australian cameraman who plays matchmaker and brings together Mel Gibson, as a newly arrived Australian foreign correspondent, and Sigourney Weaver, as the assistant military attaché at the British Embassy. A new-style old-time "dangerous" steaminess builds up as Gibson and Weaver eye each other. And though Billy Kwan is the movie's walking conscience and higher moral purpose, Linda Hunt's lyric intensity and concentration help to purify the lines she speaks. Filmed in the Philippines and Australia. With Bill Kerr, Michael Murphy, Bembol Roco, and Noel Ferrier. Based on C. J. Koch's highly readable 1978 novel. (2/21/83) (Manhattan, R.K.O. Century 86th St. Twin, and Quad Cinema. . . . ¶ Loews 83rd Quad, and R.K.O. Century Cinerama Twin; through March 10. . . . ¶ Embassy; starting March 11.)

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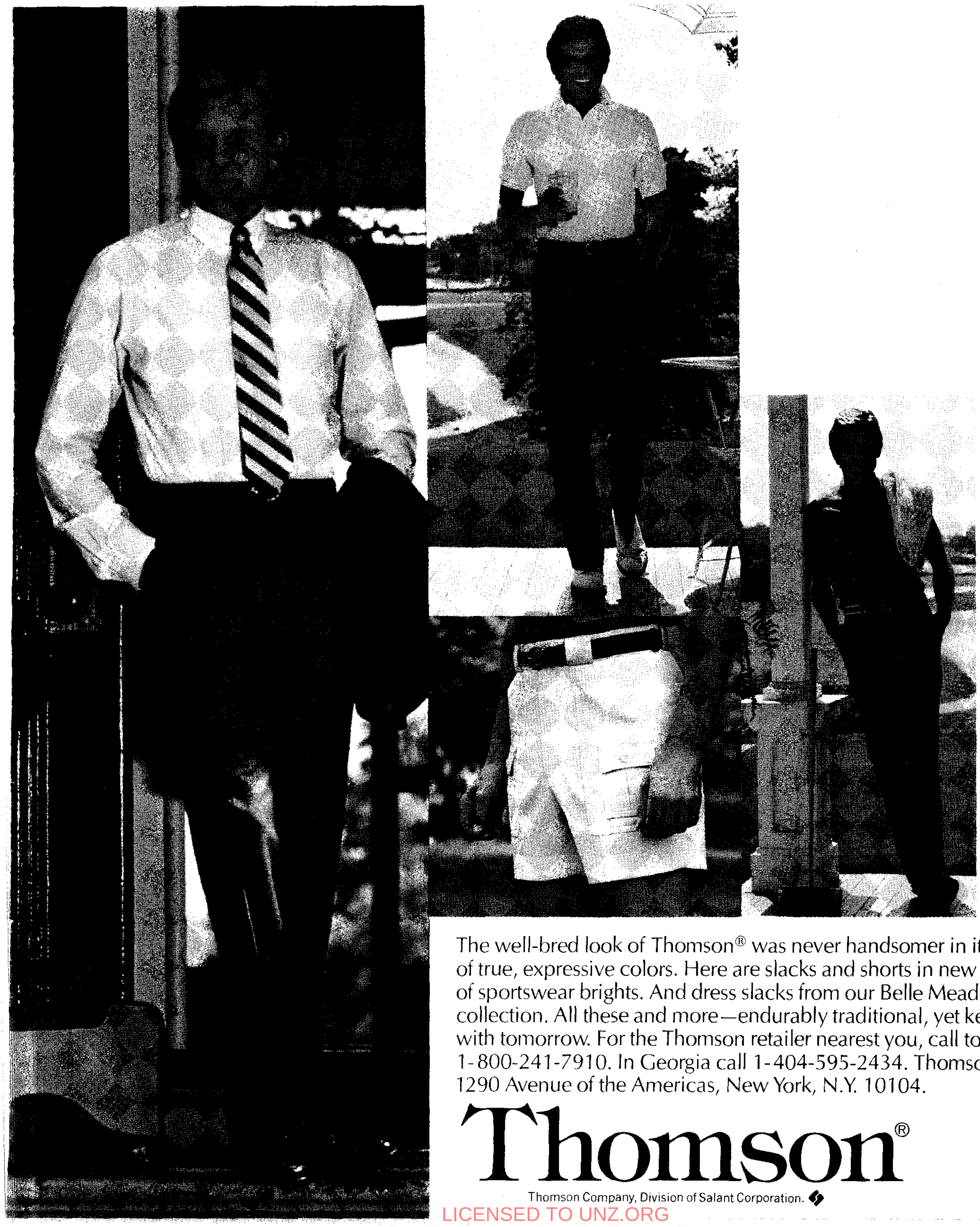

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

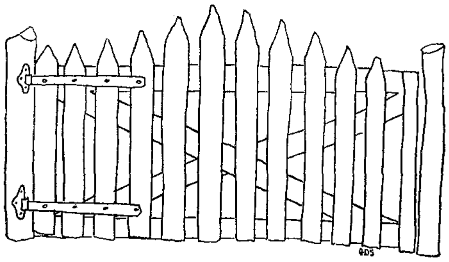
A FRIEND writes:

If an insane man showed you fifteen people he was about to execute, and told you he'd free ten if you would shoot the remaining five, what would you do? If your wife was dying, and the only way to save her was to break into a pharmacy and steal medicine you couldn't afford to buy, would you? Psychologists use questions like these to confront their subjects with "moral dilemmas;" sometimes the questions are bandied about at dinner tables where the conversation has turned from foreign films. Dilemmas they assuredly are, but oddly comforting ones, for they banish problems of values and ethics to the realm of the unlikely. Even on the West Side I.R.T., the chances are you won't meet a lunatic with fifteen hostages.

But—these days—you will almost certainly come across poor people cadging change. One raggedy man works the northbound No. 2 train every morning. Down the aisle he stumbles, shoving his Dixie Cup under every nose. At Times Square, a filthy, vacant-looking man asks people for a nickel as they climb the stairs to Forty-second Street. In the lee of a doorway at Town Hall, an old fellow in a knitted cap, with a paper sack containing an empty bottle by his feet, addresses passersby with the plea "Help me out." All over this city, people beg, and an inadvertent by-product of their hunger and thirst is the daily imposition of actual moral choices on the begged-from—choices that they can't avoid even by looking far off down the avenue and pretending not to hear, for that, of course, is a choice.

Faced with an outstretched palm, I usually dig a fist into my pocket to search for change and at the same time keep walking at a brisk midtown pace. The ambivalence is mighty. If a dime is lying loose in my pocket and if the tide has not carried me out of range, then perhaps. Otherwise, I wander on, a little angry with myself, offering a few salves to my conscience. "He'd only spend it on booze." Well, of course. The wind is cold, he has no place to spend the night, and half his life has already been drunk away. What else could he buy that would so powerfully take the edge off his misery? "I don't have any change." But I do have a dollar. Men were asking for dimes during the *Depression*, when dinner was a quarter.

No one likes giving alms, or almost no one. Even St. Francis of Assisi, who eventually learned to like *asking* for handouts, balked in his early days when he was confronted with beggars. A biographer records that one old woman used to approach him each day: "And it happened that in the newly converted young soul there rose a repugnance and a resistance—a repugnance to the dirt and misery of the old woman, a resistance to her troublesome ways and to her persistency." That same revulsion against liquor-soaked, foul-smelling, stubborn people explains some of the pain that panhandlers cause the panhandled. But there is also the bother that comes with accountability. For people of good conscience—not those who like to believe, and explain, that derelicts are derelicts because they are lazy, or those who snarl at elderly winos that they should get jobs—the confrontation with a beggar is distressing and annoying because it presents in the unshaven, unwashed flesh a problem more comfortably dealt with when it appears on the evening news. I can handle problems that are capitalized, like Nuclear Peril, or Racism, or Poverty; that is to say, I know the proper and accepted responses that a person of good conscience is expected to make to those quandaries. But when a bum sticks out his hand it is no longer Poverty, or, for that matter, poverty. It is a poor person, and telling him my truths—"Income should be better distributed," "Reagan is unfair"—won't even enlighten him; he drinks in those facts with every swig of Olde English "800." Worse, the perennially comforting notion that nothing much can be done—at least, not by one person—which may very well be true when one is talking about Poverty, means little when one is dealing with a poor person. He lacks money to buy dinner and a drink; I have enough cash in my wallet to stand him to a dozen dinners and a case of muscatel. If I give him some of my money, his problem will disappear for a night, which is quite a long time.



But when I do kick in, it doesn't ease my mind much. Giving anything implies acceptance of the notion that I can be of some help, at which point the limits of that help, short of my reducing myself to real poverty, become impossible to set. People who can't see that misery exists all around them and people who believe misery to be absolutely intractable can't be faulted for doing nothing to alleviate it. But sometimes I give quarters to strange men. What excuse do I have for not giving them more?

• •

Accentuating the Positive

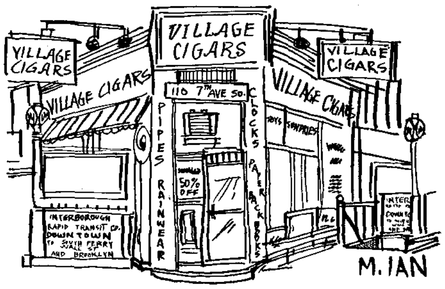
LATE last month, while the news brimmed with the convulsions and convolutions of the Environmental

Protection Agency, we drifted in and out of the Waldorf-Astoria, where for two exhortative days some seven hundred and fifty men and women from a dozen or more nations took part in a whoppingly titled International Convocation for World Environmental Regeneration. The get-together was originally set for 1982, as an observance of the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on the Environment, held in Stockholm; but because of the death of two celebrated sparkplugs of both gatherings—Barbara Ward and René Dubos—it was delayed, and it became in large measure a tribute to that pair of environmental pioneers. For instance, Maurice F. Strong, the peripatetic Canadian oilman who was secretary-general of the Stockholm affair, described them as "supreme prophets of hope," who "demonstrated that our hopes can transcend our fears."

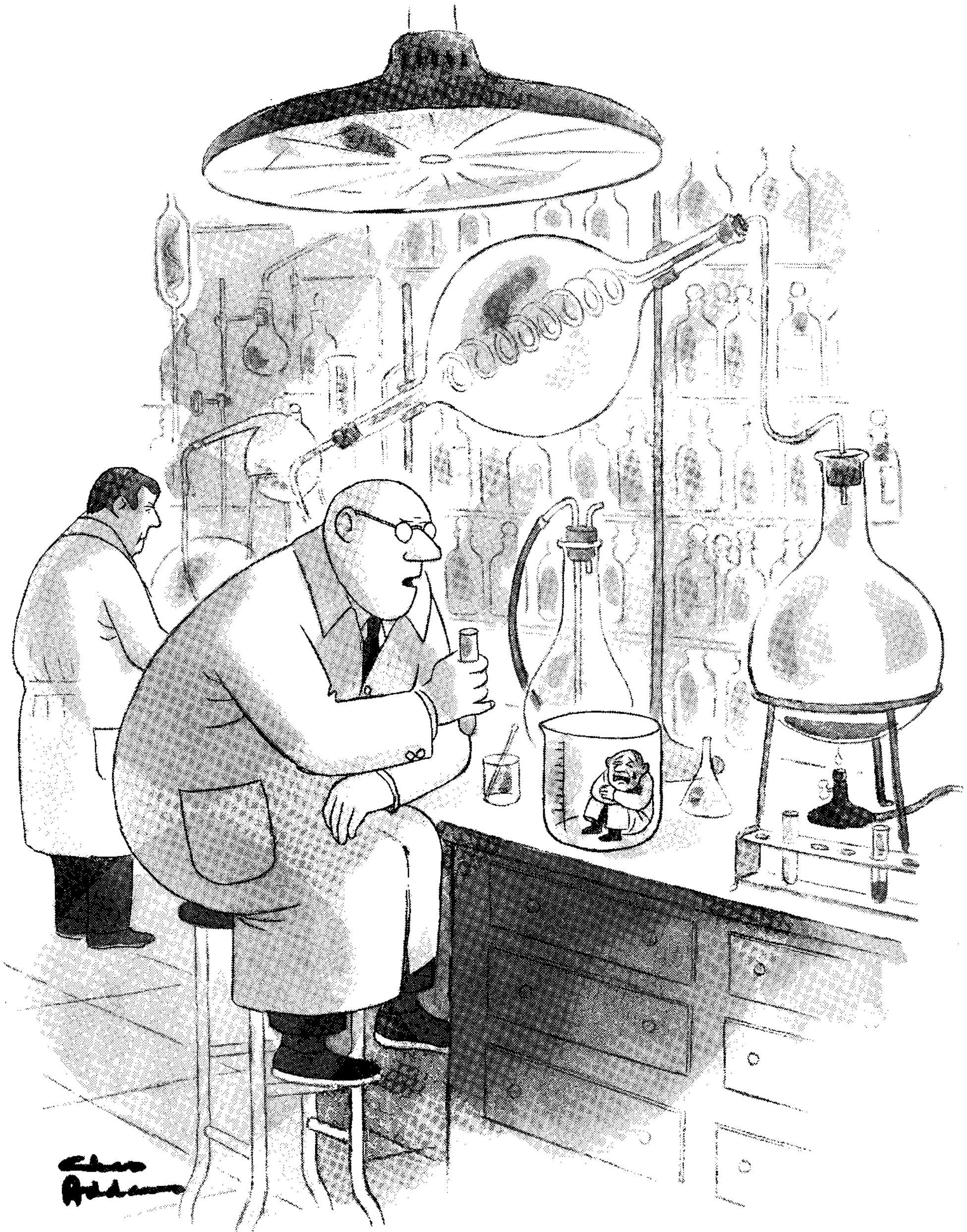
According to one of the many other speakers—Russell E. Train, a onetime Under-Secretary of the Interior—the purpose of the decennial meeting was to "accentuate the positive" in environmental matters. Mr. Train is currently the president of the World Wildlife Fund, and among other organizations represented were the Salk Institute (Dr. Jonas S., at one point: "The overview I am about to give you is so far over that we won't be able to see what the subject is all about"), the Sierra Club, the Nature Conservancy, the Environmental Law Institute, the International Center for Research on Environment, the Centro de Estudios Mesoamericano Sobre Tecnología Apropiada, and the Worldwatch Institute. The agriculturalist Lester R. Brown, Worldwatcher No. 1, informed his colleagues dourly that water tables are dropping everywhere: the North China plain, Arizona, the Aral Sea. He added that he had been served a glass of water at the hotel at breakfast without having requested it and he was not sure that that was a good idea. At lunch midway through the first day's agenda, the hotel provided a filled water glass at every setting. There was no discernible reaction from anyone on the hotel staff when, in the Empire Room, Dr. William Lowrance, the director of the Life Sciences and Public Policy Program of Rockefeller University, said during an overview of his own, "If one looks hard enough, there are dangers in everything. If we looked at this room closely, we could find all kinds of critters living in the carpet."

Some of the good news we gleaned: Ten years ago, the Bengal-tiger population of India had declined from fifty thousand to an alarming fifteen hundred; now, thanks to an all-out enterprise called Operation Tiger, the number is back up to four thousand, and rising. The snowy egret has returned to New York's Jamaica Bay, which in 1965 was by all accounts an inhospitable cesspool. Three successive Presidents of Costa Rica, though not all from the same political party, have collaborated to transform eleven per cent of that country into national parks and other protected areas. In Burma, seven miles from the Irrawaddy there's a village that until recently had no way of obtaining fresh water except by buying it from venders who drew it from the river into barrels and loaded them on oxcarts to supply the thirsty; now the villagers have a borehole and a gasoline-run pump, and even after paying their fuel bills they have had enough cash left over, from not having to patronize the barrel men, to build themselves their first school ever. Our generation of human beings, by means of a judicious distribution of washers, nuts, and bolts, could solve eighty per cent of the environmental problems of the Third World, which, according to Dr. Whitman Bassow, the president of the World Environment Center, are to that degree attributable to faulty maintenance. The Great Lakes are on the road to ecological well-being—provided, that is, that they can survive a new threat to their purity: toxic contaminants floating northward on the wind from the cotton fields of Mississippi and Alabama.

Some of the not so good news: Half of the hospital beds on earth are at present occupied by persons suffering from water-related diseases. (According to Dr. Peter G. Bourne, the president of Global Water, the World Bank believes that the globe's water woes could be alleviated by the expenditure of only three hundred billion dollars. "The money is there," Dr. Bourne said. "It's just a question of where we spend it.") The deforestation of parts of the Amazon basin is contributing to serious desertification of more northerly sectors of Brazil. Some fourteen hundred Long Island wells have been polluted by the importation into the region of an insecticide intended to annoy the Colorado potato beetle. In India—so declared B. B. Vohra, the chairman of Mrs. Gandhi's National Committee on Environmental Planning—a hundred and seventy-five million of its two hundred and sixty-six million arable hectares are now degraded, and because of erosion, waterlogging, and salinization eighty-eight million of them are beyond redemption. "What can be done?" Mr. Vohra asked. "I do not know what can be done by a convocation of this kind. Countries themselves don't always know the dangers they're in. These problems should be kept before the conscience of the world on a permanent and sustained basis."



During a coffee break, we sought out Maurice Strong, who in the course of the proceedings would be given the very first Only One Earth award—named after the Ward-Dubos book. When we last chatted with Mr. Strong, in Switzerland, just before Stockholm, he was living in a pure-air chalet on a hill outside Geneva. "I gave that up to a friend," he told us. "Recently, I lived in London for a few years, and now I'm based on a beach outside Vancouver, overlooking the Pacific. Nice clean air, and clean water, too, more or less. It's a good place for me to be centered—a nine-hour flight to Europe and nine hours also to Asia. I've been reordering my life to pursue my interests in the environment and in the developing world, but from a private position. There was a time when governments were the place from which to take the initiative. But now if one wants to move governments one has to do it from the outside. One of my special interests at the moment is trying to help small Pacific countries deal with their problems. The shift in the world economy is very much toward the Pacific. Probably nowhere else is there so much interaction between human culture and the environment." Mr. Strong enumerated, at our urging, some of the hats he currently wears: chairman, unpaid, of the multibillion-dollar Canada Development Investment Corporation; chairman, paid, of the International Energy Development Corporation, a Geneva-based outfit, with ten Arab oil-producing countries involved, that is concentrating on energy projects in the Third World; and chairman, unpaid, of the Advisory Board of the United Nations University, in Tokyo. "I've become a farmer, with a piece of some coöperatives in Costa Rica and Guatemala," he said. "I decided I ought to have a grass-roots relationship with the land. I wish I felt better about the environment. We have demonstrated, at Stockholm and subsequently, that most environmental issues are capable of being resolved, but we're not resolving them on the required scale. In spite of some undeniable successes, the environment of the planet has deteriorated in the last ten years. On the whole, some of the risks have turned out to be less acute than we perceived them to be a decade ago—those entailing supersonic aircraft, for example. And carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is perhaps somewhat less of a long-term hazard than we envisaged. But then there are acid rain and toxic wastes, and, indeed, the entire use and control of toxic substances. Basically, lack of knowledge is not the environmental problem. The problem is the lack of political will to put that knowledge to use."



"Oh, for heaven's sake, Jackson, stop blubbering. You knew this job was dangerous when you took it."

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Champion

WE recently went up to Boston to watch a young athlete named Alicia McConnell play in the 1983 United States Women's National Squash Championships. Squash racquets—called "squash" for short—is a fast, complex game played (traditionally by Ivy League men) on a four-walled indoor court, with long, thin racquets and a little dark-green rubber ball, which ricochets off the walls and travels well over a hundred m.p.h. if it's hit hard enough. We'd heard that Miss McConnell, a nineteen-year-old sophomore at the University of Pennsylvania, had lately been winning every tournament on the women's circuit, and in 1982 had become the first player in the history of the game to earn three national singles titles in one year—the Juniors, the Women's Intercollegiates, and the adult Women's. Some squash people say she is the heir to the Australian Heather McKay, who so dominated the sport that she did not lose a single match in almost twenty years, from 1962 to 1981. The first person we ran into when we got to the Harvard Club of Boston courts—that's where most of the tournament took place—was Jack Barnaby, who coached Harvard's undergraduate men in squash until he retired, in 1976, and then, in '79, came out of retirement to coach the Harvard women's team.

"You know, it used to be that you'd hunt around to find just one good female squash player," he told us. "Now there's a whole flock of girls coming out of prep schools and public clubs with real talent and training."

We asked him about Alicia McConnell.

"She's not just good—she's phenomenal," he said. "She's a natural athlete, a real fighter, and she's clearly faster and stronger, and hits the ball harder, than any of the other girls out there today."

Miss McConnell was warming up by herself on the exhibition court while Mr. Barnaby was talking. She is what one of our uncles would call a big package—five feet eight, a hundred and fifty-four pounds—with freckles, blue-green eyes, and shoulder-length brown hair, which she pulls back into a ponytail when she plays. She hit a few straight shots (called "rails") along the sidewalls, and was executing a string of perfect backhand crosscourt drop volleys when one of her friends yelled down from the gallery overlooking the court, "Hit a hard one!" Miss McConnell obligingly whaled a low, hard forehand crosscourt that made a satisfying *thraack* as it slammed against the front wall and angled off so fast and close to the floor that it was hard to imagine an opponent getting a racquet anywhere near it. Miss McConnell looked up at her friend in the gallery, grinned, and said, "You mean like that?"

We had missed her first match—against Raquel Guillen, of Mexico—which she'd won by 15–7, 15–5, 15–3. (Matches go to the winner of three out of five games.) But in the second round, against Jane Giammattei, a twenty-two-year-old from Wilmington, Delaware, Miss McConnell showed what makes her the No. 1 player in America. One instant, she was in the backcourt; the next, she was up making a spectacular retrieval (called a "get") near the front wall and putting the ball away with a perfect soft ("touch") dropshot. When she makes a great shot, she hops up and down in place, radiating exuberance. She won the first game by 15–6. During the break, the referee called over to the judge, "Do you believe those gets?" After the second, which featured a blistering low backhand crosscourt and several flawless arcing lobs, and which Miss McConnell won by 15–10, the referee shook her head and said softly to herself several times, "Wowee." Miss McConnell took the third game—and the match—at 15–6, and went on to beat her friend Mary Hulbert, who plays No. 1 for Harvard, in the quarter-finals. She used her hard serve a lot against Miss Hulbert; it's a punishing big smash that goes by too fast for most women to volley, and on a hot court like the Harvard Club's it comes rocketing off the back wall at weird angles, often completely out of reach. This time, she won by 15–9, 15–12, 15–4.

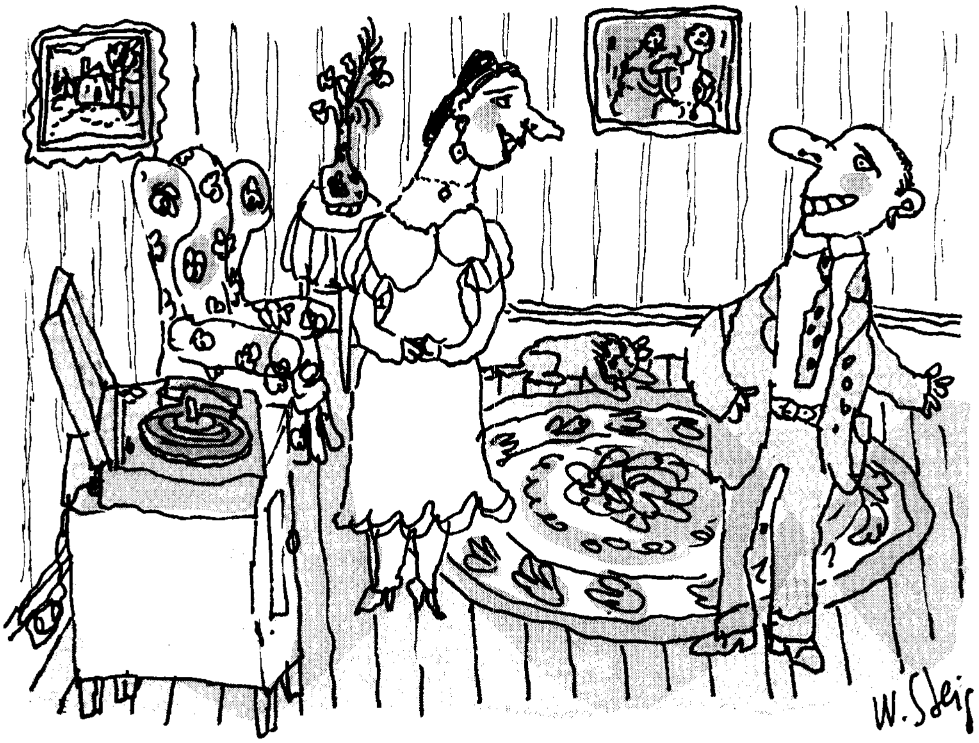
Between matches, Miss McConnell told us that she'd started playing squash when she was about twelve, at the Heights Casino club, near her family's house, in Brooklyn. "I liked squash right off," she said. "You can hit the ball really hard, and there is more to do on the court than in tennis. A friend persuaded me to enter the National Juniors in Philadelphia in 1976. I had no idea how I'd do, but I got to the final, and I thought, Hey, I could get pretty good at this." Between 1976 and 1981, she won five United States Junior Championships, the World Juniors in Sweden, and four Canadian titles. Now, at Penn, she plays varsity squash, field hockey, and lacrosse; she runs to keep in shape, and she travels to tournaments on weekends. According to N.C.A.A. rules, she may not keep the prize money she wins without forfeiting her amateur status for college play. (Not that there is much financial reward in women's squash; Miss McConnell estimates that she has won about four thousand dollars so far.) So, of course, she cannot put any of that money toward financing a planned trip to Australia next October to play in the World Championships. The international game is played with a softer, squashier ball than the American, on a wider court, and it involves even more running and harder hitting. "I'll have to train for that tournament through the summer and take next semester off from school," she told us. "I'm really going to go for it in Australia."

She breezed through the semifinals at the Harvard Club against Dr. Marigold Edwards, who is forty-nine. There was not much doubt about the outcome of this match, and both players seemed to be having fun. The audience applauded Miss McConnell's expert shots but seemed by this time to expect them from her, and at one point she dropped a perfect little winner up front, stuck her racquet under her arm, and clapped for herself. She won, 15–7, 15–6, 15–6.

The final match, on Monday, at Harvard's Hemenway Gym, was not only the high point of the weekend but one of the most exciting contests in the history of women's squash. Facing Miss McConnell was Nancy Gengler, a willowy twenty-six-year-old redhead who moves with the lithe grace of a dancer. Miss Gengler played No. 1 for Princeton in the late seventies, and in 1980-81 she was ranked first in New York City (where she is a pro at the Uptown Racquet Club) and fourth in the country. She was out last year with an injury but has played so well this season that she earned the second-seed spot in this tournament.

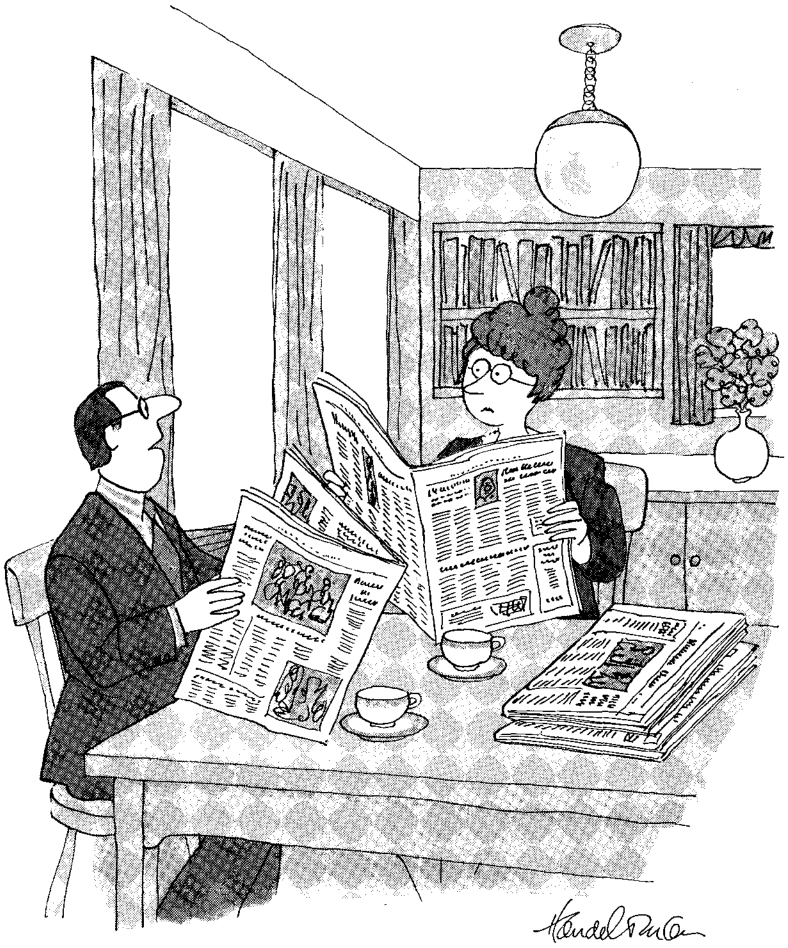
The first game got off to a tense, rather tentative start, with a tangle of bodies in the center of the court and a lot of interference ("let") calls. It soon became clear that Gengler was playing sensational squash, with great, stretched-out gets, consistent hard hitting and shot placement, and fierce determination. She kept the ball close to the sidewalls and deep in the backcourt, and that strategy seemed to prevent McConnell from firing off bullets. The score was suddenly 14–12 for Gengler, and she hit a delicate touch forehand corner shot to win the game, 15–12.

In the second game, both women played cautiously, keeping the ball deep, retrieving everything, not trying for risky winners. McConnell, powerhousing, finally pulled ahead, to win, 15–7. Things heated up in the third. McConnell uncorked her explosive drives and crosscourts, and Gengler returned them shot for shot. (When Gengler slugs the ball hard, she goes "Unnh," the way Jimmy Connors does



Invitation to the Dance

when he serves.) The rallies seemed endless—we counted more than thirty exchanges in one point—and after a few exhausting minutes Gengler was up 14–12. McConnell muttered to herself, "Come *on*," turned up the steam, and brought herself back even at 14-all. In a 14-point tie, the player who got to 14 first chooses whether to play just one more point ("no set") or the best three out of five ("set three"). Gengler chose no set. McConnell served. Gengler got up front and hit a crisp, low backhand rail. McConnell zoomed in behind her and sliced a backhand crosscourt out of Gengler's reach to win the point and the game. We exhaled deeply and stood up to stretch. "Hey, Mom!" McConnell called to her mother in the gallery. "Had a heart attack yet?"



"Could we swap sections? I've finished worrying about the E.P.A., and now I'd like to worry about Herschel Walker."

McConnell took off in the fourth game to a 5–0 lead, mixing up her shots, relying less on power and more on forcing the play up and down, back and forth across the court, capitalizing on her extraordinary speed. When Gengler came back to 3–7, McConnell started launching her cannon serve. The points were shorter now, with lots of let calls and disputes. McConnell moved up to 13–9, then to 14–9. She needed one point to win the match. Gengler rallied with two winners in a row, bringing the score to 11–14. We held our breath. Gengler served, then inadvertently got in the way of McConnell's shot, and the referee awarded McConnell the point, rather anticlimactically ending the game and match at 15–11.

At Mr. Chow's

THE invitation read, "Countess Christina Wachtmeister, Lord Jermyn, and Susan Blond invite you to a late night party in honour of Culture Club and their American triumph. Saturday, February 26. Mr. Chow's. 324 East 57th Street. 11:30 P.M. RSVP Epic Records. Present this invitation at door."

"I suppose you know the names and recognize the faces of many of the people here," said the man.

"There's a girl whose style of dressing was once described in a book on fashion and fashionable people as grouchy simplicity," said the girl.

"I suppose you know this restaurant well and eat here all the time," said the man.

"There's the rock critic Lisa Robinson, there's the photographer Sonia Moskowitz, there's the artist and personality Marja Samson, there's John Sykes, the director of programming for MTV, there's Maria Vidal, formerly of the group Desmond Child and Rouge, there's Gregg Geller, the A. & R. man who signed the group Culture Club to the Epic label, there's Lord Jermyn, a man who is said to own the longest Mercedes in the world and who is also one of the hosts, there's the rock musician Rick Derringer, there's the rock musician Stevie Winwood, there's the English rock singer Boy George's manager, Tony Gordon," said the girl.

"Whenever I am introduced to someone, I always wonder what he or she was like as a child," said the man.

"There's a stunning black girl dressed in a long white shift," said the girl.

"Though, of course, sometimes when I am introduced to someone I wonder what he or she might be like as something other than a child, doing things other than what a child might do," said the man.

"There's another stunning black girl, with hair that stands up on end as if she were in a comic book and had just had an incredible fright," said the girl.

"Boy George is a man and yet he wears makeup and therefore sometimes looks like a woman," said the man.

"I saw Boy George walking down the street one day and to myself I admired his shade of lipstick," said the girl.

"Boy George is a white man and yet when he sings he sounds like a black girl, a very young black girl," said the man.

"That day, just before I saw Boy George walking down the street, I had been singing his song 'Do You Really Want to Hurt Me' to myself: 'Do you really want to hurt me, Do you really want to make me cry.' I thought, What a coincidence, until I saw that it was a big hit on the charts. Half the people who saw Boy George that day were singing his song shortly before. That day I saw Boy George, I thought, How bold of him to wear so much foundation on his face and not worry about clogged pores," said the girl.

"I should like to go home and sleep in my bed now," said the man. "My bed is a bed, I recognize it to be my bed, I never wonder about anything when I am lying in my bed."

THE EXECUTOR

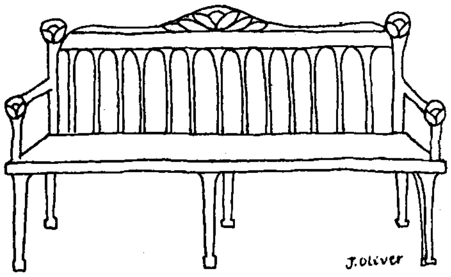
WHEN my uncle died, all the literary manuscripts went to a university foundation, except one. The correspondence went, too, and the whole of his library. They came (a white-haired man and a young girl) and surveyed his study. Everything, they said, would be desirable, and it would make a good price if I let the whole room go—his chair, his desk, the carpet, even his ashtrays. I agreed to this. I left everything in the drawers of the desk just as it was when my uncle died, including the bottle of Librium and a rusty razor blade.

My uncle died this way: He was sitting on the bank of the river, playing a fish. As the afternoon faded, a man passed by, and then a young couple who made pottery in the village passed him. As they said later, he was sitting peacefully awaiting the catch, and of course they didn't disturb him. As night fell, the Colonel and his wife passed by; they were on their way home from their daily walk. They knew it was too late for my uncle to be simply sitting there, so they went to look. He had been dead, the doctor pronounced, from two to two and a half hours. The fish was still struggling with the bait. It was a mild heart attack. Everything my uncle did was mild, so different from everything he wrote. Yet perhaps not so different. He was supposed to be "far out," so one didn't know what went on out there. Besides, he had not long returned from a trip to London. They say still waters run deep.

But far out was how he saw himself. He once said that if you could imagine modern literature as a painting, perhaps by Bruegel the Elder, the people and the action were in the foreground, full of color—eating, stealing, copulating, laughing, courting each other, excreting, and stabbing each other, selling things, climbing trees. Then in the distance, at the far end of a vast plain, there he would be, a speck on the horizon, always receding and always there, and always a necessary and mysterious component of the picture; always there and never to be taken away, essential to the picture—a speck in the distance, which if you were to blow up the detail would simply be a vague figure, plodding on the other way.

I am no fool, and he knew it. He didn't know it at first, but he had seven months in which to learn that fact. I gave up my job in Edinburgh in the government office, a job with a pension, to come here to the lonely house among the Pentland Hills to live with him and take care of things. I think he imagined I was going to be another Elaine when he suggested the arrangement. He had no idea how much better I was for him than Elaine. Elaine was his mistress—that is the stark truth. "My common-law wife," he called her, explaining that in Scotland, by tradition, the woman you are living with is your wife. As if I didn't know all that nineteenth-century folklore, and it's long died out. Nowadays you have to do more than say "I marry you, I marry you, I marry you" to make a woman your wife. Of course, my uncle was a genius and a character. I allowed for that. Anyway, Elaine died and I came here a month later. Within a month, I had cleared up the best part of the disorder. He called me a Scottish puritan girl, and at forty-one it was nice to be a girl, and I wasn't against the Scottish puritanical attribution, either, since I am proud to be a Scot; I feel nationalistic about it. He always had that smile of his when he said it, so I don't know how he meant it. They say he had that smile of his when he was found dead, fishing.

"I appoint my niece Susan Kyle to be my sole literary executor." I don't wonder he decided on this course after I had been with him for three months. Probably for the first time in his life, all his papers were in order. I went into Edinburgh and bought box files and cover files, and I filed away all that mountain of papers, each under its separate heading. And I knew what was what. You didn't catch me filing away a letter from Angus Wilson or Saul Bellow in the same place as an ordinary "W" or "B," a Miss Mary Whitelaw or a Mrs. Jonathan Brown. I knew the worth of these letters; they went into a famous-persons file, bulging and of value. So that in a short time my uncle said, "There's little for me to do now, Susan, but die." Which I thought was melodramatic, and said so. But I could see he was forced to admire my good sense. He said, "You remind me of my mother, who prepared her shroud all ready for her funeral." His mother was my grandmother, Janet Kyle. Why shouldn't she have sat and sewn her shroud? People in those days had very little to do, and here I was running the house and looking after my uncle's papers with only the help of Mrs. Donaldson three mornings a week, where my grandmother had four pairs of hands for indoor help and three out. The rest of the family never went near the house after my grandmother died, for Elaine was always there with my uncle.



The property was distributed among the family, but I was the sole literary executor. And it was up to me to do what I liked with his literary remains. It was a good thing I had everything inventoried and filed, ready for sale. They came and took the total archive, as they called it, away, all the correspondence and manuscripts except one. That one I kept for myself. It was the novel he was writing when he died, an unfinished manuscript. I thought, Why not? Maybe I will finish it myself and publish it. I am no fool, and my uncle must have known how the book was going to end. I never read any of his correspondence, mind you; I was too busy those months filing it all in order. I did think, however, that I would read this manuscript and perhaps put an ending to it. There were already ten chapters. My uncle had told me there was only another chapter to go. So I said nothing to the foundation about that one unfinished manuscript; I was only too glad when they had come and gone and the papers were out of the house. I got the painters in to clean the study. Mrs. Donaldson said she had never seen the house looking so like a house should be.

UNDER my uncle's will, I inherited the house, and I planned eventually to rent rooms to tourists in the summer, bed-and-breakfast. In the meantime, I set about reading the unfinished manuscript, for it was only April, and I'm not a one to let the grass grow under my feet. I had

learned to decipher that old-fashioned handwriting of his, which looked good on the page but was not too clear. My uncle had a treasure in me those last months of his life, although he said I was like a book without an index—all information, and no way of getting at it. I asked him to tell me what information he ever got out of Elaine, who never passed an exam in her life.

This last work of my uncle's was an unusual story, for him, set in the seventeenth century here among the Pentland Hills. He had told me only that he was writing something strong and cruel, and that this was easier to accomplish in a historical novel. It was about the slow identification and final trapping of a witch, and I could see as I read it that he hadn't been joking when he said it was strong and cruel; he had often said things to frighten and alarm me—I don't know why. By Chapter 10 the trial of the witch in Edinburgh was only halfway through. Her fate depended entirely on Chapter 11, and on the negotiations that were being conducted behind the scenes by the opposing factions of intrigue. My uncle had left a pile of notes he had accumulated toward this novel, and I retained these along with the manuscript. But there was no sign in the notes as to how my uncle had decided to resolve the fate of the witch—whose name was Edith, but that is by the way. I put the manuscript and papers away, for there were many other things to be done following the death of my famous uncle. The novel itself was written by hand in twelve notebooks. In the twelfth, only the first two pages had been filled, the rest of the pages were blank; I am sure of this. The two filled pages came to the end of Chapter 10. At the top of the next page was written "Chapter Eleven." I looked through the rest of the notebook to make sure my uncle had not made some note there on how he intended to continue; all blank, I am sure of it. I put the twelve notebooks, together with the sheaf of loose notes, in a drawer of the solid-mahogany dining-room sideboard.

A few weeks later, I brought the notebooks out again, intending to consider how I might proceed with the completion of the book and so enhance its value. I read again through Chapter 10; then, when I turned to the page where "Chapter Eleven" was written, there in my uncle's handwriting was the following:

> Well, Susan, how do you feel about finishing my novel? Aren't you a greedy little snoot, holding back my unfinished work, when you know the Foundation paid for the lot? What about your puritanical principles? Elaine and I are waiting to see how you manage to write Chapter Eleven. Elaine asks me to add it's lovely to see you scouring and cleaning those neglected corners of the house. But don't you know, Jaimie is having you on. Where does he go after lunch?
>
> YOUR AFFEC UNCLE

I could hardly believe my eyes. The first shock I got was the bit about Jaimie, and then came the second shock, that the words were there at all. It was twelve-thirty at night, and Jaimie had gone home. Jaimie Donaldson is the son of Mrs. Donaldson, and it isn't his fault he's out of work. We have had experiences together, but nobody is to know that, least of all Mrs. Donaldson, who introduced him into the household merely to clean the windows and stoke the boiler. But the words? Where did they come from?

It is a lonely house, here in a fold of the Pentlands, surrounded by woods—five miles to the nearest cottage, six to Mrs. Donaldson's, and the buses stop at 10 P.M. I felt a great fear there in the dining room, with the twelve notebooks on the table, and the pile of papers—a great cold, and a panic. I ran to the hall and lifted the telephone, but didn't know how to explain myself or who to phone. My story would sound like that of a woman gone crazy. Mrs. Donaldson? The police? I couldn't think what to say to them at that hour of night. "I have found some words that weren't there before in my uncle's manuscript, and in his own hand." It was unthinkable. Then I thought perhaps someone had played me a trick. Oh no, I knew that this couldn't be. Only Mrs. Donaldson had been in the dining room, and only to dust, with me to help her. Jaimie had no chance to go there, not at all. I never used the dining room now, and had meals in the kitchen. In fact, I knew it wasn't them—it was Uncle. I wished with all my heart that I was a strong woman, as I had always felt I was, strong and sensible. I stood in the hall by the telephone, shaking. "O God, everlasting and almighty," I prayed, "make me strong and guide and lead me as to how Mrs. Thatcher would conduct herself in circumstances of this nature."

I didn't sleep all night. I sat in the big kitchen, stoking up the fire. Only once I moved, to go back into the dining room and make sure that those words were there. Beyond a doubt they were, and in my uncle's handwriting—that handwriting it would take an expert forger to copy. I put the manuscript back in the drawer; I locked the dining-room door and took the key. My uncle's study, now absolutely empty, was above the kitchen. If he was haunting the house, I heard no sound from there or from anywhere else. It was a fearful night, waiting there by the fire.

Mrs. Donaldson arrived in the morning, complaining that Jaimie was getting lazy; he wouldn't rise. Too many late nights.

"Where does he go after lunch?" I said.

"Oh, he goes for a round of golf after his dinner," she said. "He's always ready for a round of golf, no matter what else there is to do. Public golf is the curse of Scotland."

I had a good idea who Jaimie was meeting on the golf course, and I could almost have been grateful to Uncle for pointing out to me in that sly way of his that Jaimie wandered in the hours after the midday meal, which we called lunch and they called their dinner. By five o'clock in the afternoon, Jaimie would come here to the house to fetch up the coal, bank the fire, and so forth. But all afternoon he would be on the links with that girl who works at the manse, Greta, younger sister of Elaine, the one who moved in here openly, ruining my uncle's morals, leaving the house to rot. I always suspected that family. After Elaine died, it came out he had even introduced her to all his friends; I could tell from the letters of condolence, how they said things like "He never got over the loss of Elaine" and "He couldn't live without her." And sometimes he called me Elaine by mistake. I was furious. Once, for example, I said, "Uncle, stop pacing about down here. Go up to your study and do your scribbling; I'll bring you a cup of cocoa."

He said, with that glaze-eyed look he always had when he was interrupted in his thoughts, "What's come over you, Elaine?"

I said, "I'm not Elaine, thank you very much."

"Oh, of course," he said, "you are not Elaine, you are most certainly not her."

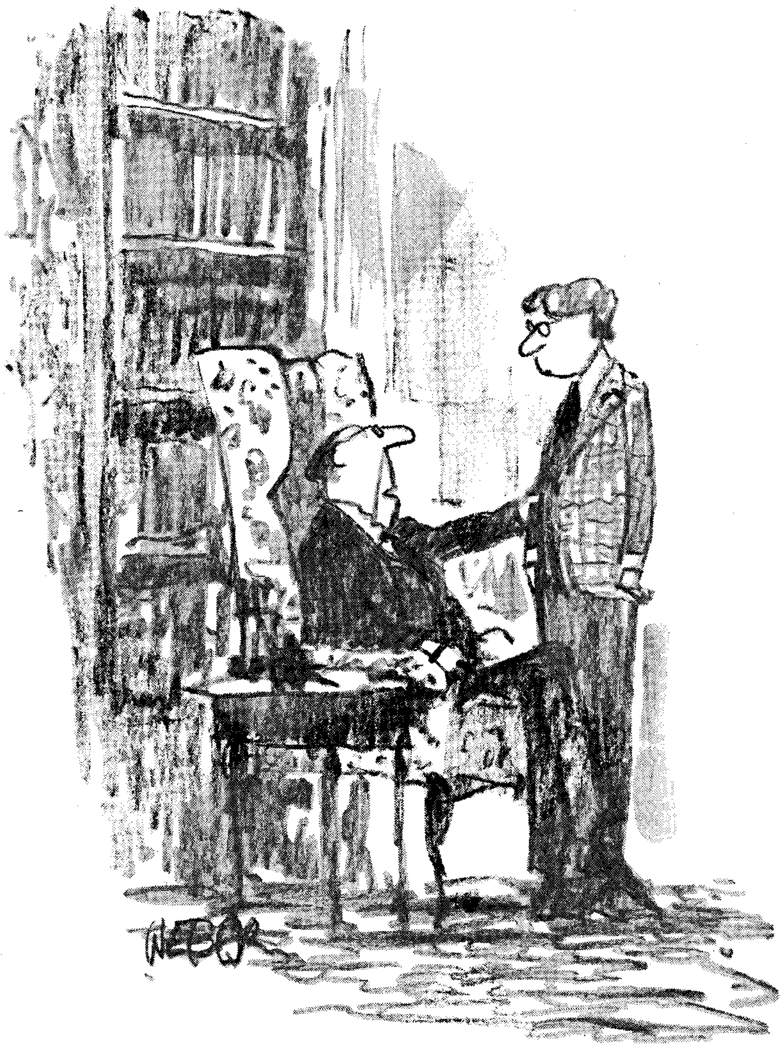
If the public that read his books by the tens of thousands could have seen behind the scenes, I often wondered, what would they have thought? I told him so many a time, but he smiled in that sly way, that smile he still had on his face when they found him fishing and stone dead.

After Mrs. Donaldson left the house, at noon, I went up to my bedroom, half dropping from lack of sleep. Mrs. Donaldson hadn't noticed anything; you could be falling down dead—they never look at you. I slept till four. It was still light. I got up and locked the doors, front and back. I pulled the curtains shut, and when Jaimie rang the bell at five o'clock I didn't open, I just let him ring. Eventually, he went away. I expect he had plenty to wonder about. But I wasn't going to make him welcome before the fire and get him his supper and take off my clothes there in the back room on the divan with him in front of the television while Uncle and Elaine were looking on, even though it is only Nature. No, I turned on the television for myself. You would never believe, it was a program on the Scottish BBC about Uncle. I switched to TV 1, and got a quiz show. And I felt hungry, for I'd eaten nothing since the night before.

But I couldn't face any supper until I had assured myself about that manuscript. I was fairly certain by now that it was a dream. Maybe I've been overworking, I thought to myself. I had the key to the dining room in my pocket, and I took it and opened the door; I closed the curtains, and I went to the drawer and took out the notebook.

Not only were the words that I had read last night there, new words were added, a whole paragraph:

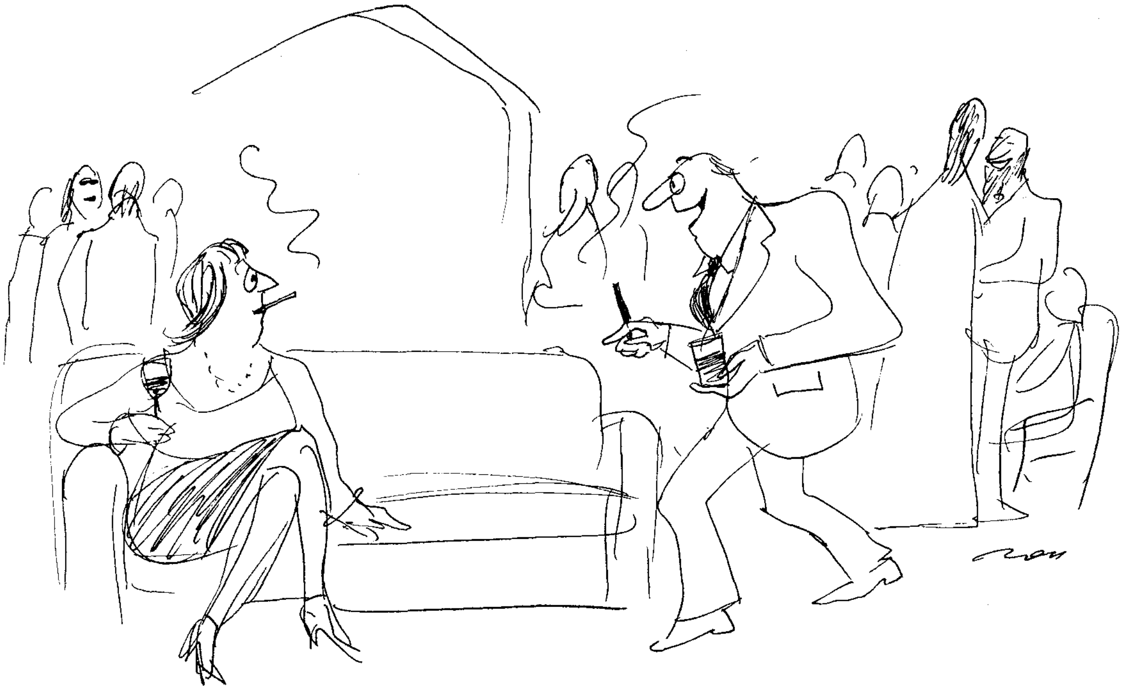
> Look up the Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 5, Verses 1 to 10. See what



"Son, you're all grown up now. You owe me two hundred and fourteen thousand dollars."

happened to Ananias and Sapphira his wife. You're not getting on very fast with your scribbling, are you, Susan? Elaine and I were under the impression you were going to write Chapter Eleven. Why don't you take a cup of cocoa and get on with it? First read Acts 5: 1-10.

YOUR AFFEC UNCLE



"Oh, good! I've been looking for someone who drinks and smokes."

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Well, I shoved the book in the drawer and looked round the dining room. I looked under the table and behind the curtains. It didn't look as if anything had been touched. I got out of the room and locked the door, I don't know how. I went to fetch my Bible, praying, "O God, omnipotent and all-seeing, direct and instruct me as to the way out of this situation, astonishing as it must appear to Thee." I looked up the passage:

> But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,
> And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.
> But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the land?

I didn't read any more, because I knew how it went on. Ananias and Sapphira, his wife, were both struck dead for holding back the portion of the sale for themselves. This was Uncle getting at me for holding back his manuscript from the foundation. That's an impudence, I thought, to make such a comparison from the Bible, when he was an open and avowed sinner himself.

I thought it all over for a while. Then I went into the dining room and got out that last notebook. Something else had been written since I had put it away, not half an hour before:

> Why don't you get on with Chapter Eleven? We're waiting for it.

I tore out the page, put the book away, and locked the door. I took the page to the fire and put it on to burn. Then I went to bed.

THIS went on for a month. My uncle always started the page afresh with "Chapter Eleven," followed by a new message. He even went so far as to put in that I had kept back bits of the housekeeping money, although, he wrote, I was well paid enough. That's a matter of opinion, and who did the economizing, anyway? Always, after reading Uncle's disrespectful comments, I burned the page, and we were getting near the end of the notebook. He would say things to show he followed me round the house, and even knew my dreams. When I went into Edinburgh for some shopping he knew exactly where I had been and what I'd bought. He and Elaine listened in to my conversations on the telephone if I rang up an old friend. I didn't let anyone in the house except Mrs. Donaldson. No more Jaimie. He even knew if I took a dose of salts and how long I had sat in the bathroom, the awful old man.

Mrs. Donaldson one morning said she was leaving. She said to me, "Why don't you see a doctor?"

I said, "Why?" But she wouldn't speak.

One day soon afterward, a man rang me up from the foundation. They didn't want to bother me, they said, but they were rather puzzled. They had found in Uncle's letters many references to a novel, "The Witch of the Pentlands," which he had been writing just before his death; and they had found among the papers a final chapter to this novel, which he had evidently written on loose pages on a train, for a letter of his, kindly provided by one of his many correspondents, proved this. Only they had no idea where the rest of the manuscript could be. In the end the witch, Edith, is condemned to be burned but dies of her own will power before the execution, he said, but there must be ten more chapters leading up to it. This was Uncle's most metaphysical work, and based on a true history, the man said, and he must stress that it was very important.

I said I would have a look. I rang back that afternoon and said I had found the whole book in a drawer in the dining room.

So the man came to get it. On the phone he sounded very suspicious, in case there were more manuscripts. "Are you sure that's everything? You know, the foundation's price included the whole archive. No, don't trust it to the mail. I'll be there tomorrow at two."

Just before he arrived I took a good drink, whiskey and soda, as, indeed, I had been taking from sheer need all the past month. I brought out the notebooks. On the blank page was written:

> Goodbye, Susan. It's lovely being a speck in the distance.
>
> YOUR AFFEC UNCLE

—MURIEL SPARK

TROPIC ZONE

I

A white dory, face down, its rusted keel staining
the hull, bleeds under the dawn leaves of an almond.
Vines grip the seawall and drop like olive-green infantry
over from Cuba. This is my ocean, but it is speaking
another language, since its accent changes around
different islands. The wind is up early, campaigning
with the leaflets of seagulls, but, from the balcony
of this guesthouse, I resist the return
of this brightening noun whose lines must be translated
into "*el mar*" or "*la mar*," and death itself to "*la muerte*."
A rusty sparrow alights on a rustier rain gauge
in the front garden, but every squeak addresses
me in testy Spanish. "Change to a light shirt. A
walk on our beach should teach you our 'S's
as the surf says them. You'll recognize hovels,
rotting fishnets. Also why a white dory was shot
for being a gringo." I go back upstairs,
for so much here is the Empire envied and hated
that whether one chooses to say "*ven-thes*" or "*ven-ces*"
involves the class struggle as well. So, be discreet.
Changed to a light shirt, I walk out to Cervantes Street.
Shadow-barred. A water sprinkler or a tank approaches.
The corners are empty. The boulevards open like novels
waiting to be written. Clouds like the beginnings of stories.

II

The sun is wholly up now; things are white or green:
clouds, hills, walls, leaves on the walls, and their shadows;
dew turns into dust on the quiet municipal cedars.
The sprinkler rolls past as "the wrong done to our fathers"
weeps along empty streets, down serene *avenidas*
named after stone poets, but the sprinkling only grows
traffic. When noon strikes the present-arms pose
of sentries in boxes before the Palace of Governors,
history will pierce your memory like a migraine;
but however their flame trees catch, the green winds smell
lime-scented,
the indigo hills lie anchored in seas of cane
as deep as my island's, I know I would feel disoriented
in Oriente, my tongue dried to a coral stone.
Along white-walled, palm-splashed Condado, the
breeze smells
of a dialect so strong it is not disinfected
by the exhausts of limousines idling outside the hotels,
while, far out, unheard, the grinding reef of the Morro
spits out like corals the indigestible sorrow
of the Indian, bits for the National Museum.
Blue skies convert all genocide into fiction,
but a man, drawn to the seawall, crouches
like a question
or a prayer, and my own prayer is to write
lines as mindless as the ocean's of linear time,
since time is the first province of Caesar's jurisdiction.

III

Above hot tin billboards, above Hostería del Mar,
wherever the Empire has raised the standard of living
by blinding high rises, gestures are made to the culture
of a remorseful past, whose artists must stay unforgiving
even when commissioned. If the white architectural
mode is
International Modern, the décor must be the Creole's,
so, in a terra-cotta lobby with palms, a local jingle
gurgles of a new *cerveza*, frost-crusted
and golden,
right next to a mural that has nationalized Eden
in vehement acrylics, and this universal theme
sees the golden beer, the gold mines, "the gold
of their bodies"
as one, and our two tropics as erogenous zones.
A necklace of emerald islands is fringed with lace
starched like the ruffles of Isabella's bodice,
now the white-breasted Niña and Pinta and
Santa María
bring the phalli of lances penetrating a jungle
whose vines spread apart to a parrot's
primal scream.
Then, shy as the ferns their hands are
bending, stare
fig-nippled maidens with faces calm as stones,
and, as is the case with so many revolutions,
the visitor doubts the murals and trusts the beer.

IV

Noon empties balconies, but the arched eyebrows
of the plaza are not amazed at the continuum—
a fly drilling holes in a snoring peon's face,
the arched shade of patios humming with
audible heat,
and long-fingered shadows retracting to a fist.
The statue's sword arm is tired, he'd like
to dismount
from his leaf-green stallion and curl up
in the shade
with the rest of his country. And that's how it was
in the old scenarios, a backdrop for the hectic
conscience of the gringo with his Wasp's rage
at tedium,
but now in the banana republics, whose bunches
of recruits
look green in fatigues, techniques of camouflage
have taught the skill of slitting stomachs like fruits,
and a red star without a sickle is stitched to a flag.
Now the women who were folded over
wrought-iron
balconies like bedsteads, their black manes
hanging down,
are not whores with roses but dolls broken in half.
On a wall a bleeding "VIVA!" hieroglyphs speeches
that lasted four hours in marathon dialectic.
Sand-colored mongrels prowl round
a young Antigone,
her face flat as an axe of pre-Columbian stone.
At the movies, I still love it when gap-toothed
bandidos laugh
in growling pidgin, then grin at the
sudden contradiction
of roses stitching their guts. In colonial fiction
evil remains comic and only achieves importance
when the gringo crosses the plaza, flayed by the
shadows of fronds.

V

"Wherever a thought can go back seventy years
there is hope for tradition in these tropical zones."
The old men mutter in white suits, elbows twitching
like pigeons

on their canes, under the dusty leaves of the almonds
that grant them asylum from paths ruined by bicycles,
from machines with umbrellas dispensing franks and cones.
Their revolution is that things come in circles.
The Socialists do not appreciate that.
But old almonds do, and there is appreciation
in the tilt of a cannon's chin to the horizon,
and applause from the seawall when a crash of lace
is like that moment of flamenco, *Ah, mi corazón*,
that moment of flamenco when the dancer's
heels rattled like gunfire and, above her tilted comb, her
clapping hands were like midnight on a clock!
For each old man, in his white panama hat,
there is no ideology in the light: this one
shakes his cane like a question without answers,
that one riddles the militia with his smiles,
another one leans backward in a coma
of silence—when lilies opened like Victrola horns,
when dusk spread feathers like a fighting cock,
and down the Sunday promenade for miles
the Civil Guard kept playing "La Paloma"
and gulls, like doves, waltzed to the gusting lace
and everyone wore white and there was grace.

VI

You've forgotten the heat. It could burn from a zinc fence.
Not even the palms on the seafront quietly stir.
The Empire sneers at all thoughts in the future tense.
Only the shallows of this inland ocean mutter
lines from another sea, which this one resembles—
myths of analogous islands of olive and myrtle,
the dream of the drowsing Gulf. Although her temples,
white blocks against green, are hotels, and her stoas
shopping malls, in time they will make good ruins;
so what if the hand of the Empire is as slow as
a turtle signing the surf when it comes to treaties?
Genius will come to contradict history,
and that's there in their brown bodies, in the olives of eyes,
as when the pimps of demotic Athens threaded the chaos
of Asia, and girls from the stick villages, henna-whores,
were the hetaerae. The afternoon tide ebbs, and the stench
of further empires—rising from berries that fringe
the hems of tyrants and beaches—reaches a bench
where clouds descend their steps like senates passing,
no different from when, under leaves of rattling myrtle,
they shared one shade, the poet and the assassin.

VII

Imagine, where sand is now, the crawling lava
of military concrete. Sprinkle every avenue with the gray
tears of the people's will. Tyranny brings over
its colonies this disorientation of weather. A new ogre
erects his bronzes over the parks, though the senate
of swallows still arranges itself on benches
for the usual agenda, and three men can still argue
under a changed street sign, but the streets are emptier
and the mouth dry. Imagine the fading hysteria
of peeling advertisements, and note how all the graffiti agree
with the government. You might say, Yes, but here are mountains,
park benches, working fountains, a brass band on Sundays,
here the baker still gives a special twist to the end
of his father's craft, until one morning you notice
that the three men talk softly, that mothers call
from identical windows for their children to come home,
that the smallest pamphlet is stamped with a single star.
The days feel longer, people resemble their cars
that are gray as their uniforms. In the millennium,
most men, at night, sleep with their eyes to the wall.

VIII

If you were here, in this white room, in this hotel
whose hinges stay hot, even in the wind off the sea,
you would sprawl, knocked out by *la hora de siesta;*
you couldn't rise for the resurrection bell,
or the sea's gong ringing with silver, you'd stay down.
If you were touched, you'd only change that gesture
to a runner's in that somnambulist's marathon.
And I'd let you sleep. Things topple gradually
when the alarm clock, with its conductor's baton,
begins at one: the cattle fold their knees;
in the quiet pastures, only a mare's tail switches,
feather-dusting flies, drunk melons roll into ditches,
and gnats keep spiralling to their paradise.
Now the first gardener, under the tree of knowledge,
forgets that he's Adam. In the ribbed air
each patch of shade dilates like an oasis
to the tired butterfly, a green lagoon for anchor.
Down the white beach, calm as a forehead
that has felt the wind, a sacramental stasis
would bring you sleep, which is midsummer's crown,
sleep that divides its lovers without rancor,
sweat without sin, the furnace without fire,
calm without self, the dying with no fear,
as afternoon removes those window bars
that striped your sleep like a kitten's, or a prisoner's.

—Derek Walcott

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE store that sold mission suits was in downtown Salt Lake City. Donald Edmunds, who was about to begin his missionary effort, went there with his mother. "San Francisco, that's where he's going to," she told the salesperson. "I'm glad it's not Burma or someplace like that." The suit she chose for her son was dark brown. It came with a vest and also a pair of lighter-colored trousers. Edmunds had to admit that her taste was excellent. When he tried on the suit at home, in front of his bedroom mirror, it seemed to give him the sort of solid, mature look he had always associated with the elders of the church. He grew very fond of it, in fact, thinking that it had somehow been meant for him, so he was very disappointed when, on his scheduled day of departure, he went out to the airport and found that his partner in the missionary effort, Walter Davis, was wearing exactly the same thing.

"Hey, Donald," said Davis, waving as Edmunds approached. "We're twins."

"I'm no twin of yours," Edmunds said. He was furious. He grabbed Davis by an elbow and pulled him along. "Didn't they tell you I'd already bought the suit?"

"Nobody said anything. They had about ten of them anyway."

"Did you get those light-colored trousers?" Edmunds asked. When Davis nodded, he said, "O.K., then, here's what you do. You take your suitcase into the men's room and change into them."

"Why should I do that?"

Edmunds stopped short, put his hands on his hips, and blew some aggravated air out of his mouth, the way his old football coach used to. "I guess you think the missionary effort is just a game, Walter," he said.

"I don't think that."

"Well, how do you figure anybody's going to take us seriously if we're both dressed alike?"

Davis thought this over for a minute or two. "All right," he said, "I'll change."

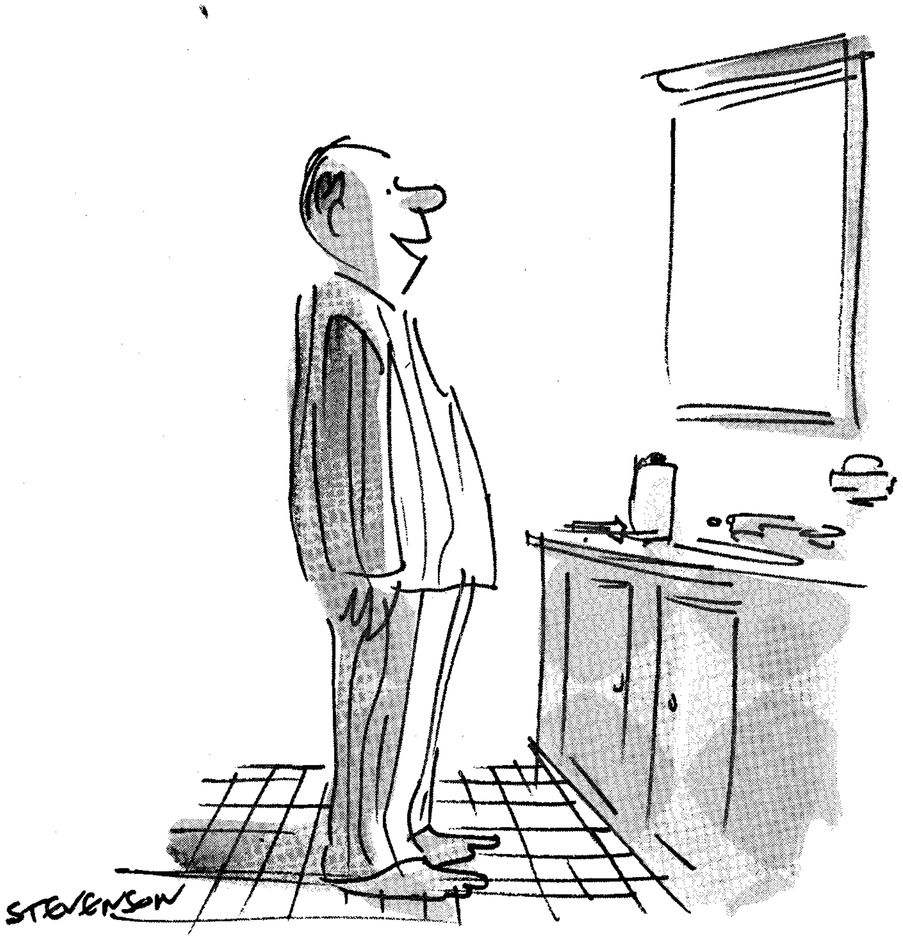
But the new trousers did not produce the effect that Edmunds had hoped for—instead, they made Davis look clownish. As he walked along next to Edmunds, he seemed to be poking fun at the whole concept of a staid brown suit. The trousers—light beige, with tiny checks—undermined the image that Edmunds had so patiently cultivated in front of his mirror. They didn't even fit properly. For some reason, they were so big in the waist that Davis had to cinch his belt to the very last hole, which left a long, inappropriate tongue of leather dangling down.

All the way to San Francisco, Edmunds worried about how he was going to explain the suits to Mr. Harvey, the church elder with whom they were to stay. He had never wanted to be paired with Davis in the first place, because Davis had an unaggressive attitude toward life which would probably affect his ability to bring in converts. It was Edmunds' plan to apply mental toughness to this missionary effort; he wanted to set a record for most converts in a single city.

Mr. Harvey was waiting for them at the baggage-claim area inside the airport terminal. He had an index card pinned to his lapel; he'd printed "MORRIS HARVEY" on it in block letters. While Davis collected the bags, Edmunds shook Harvey's hand and said, "You're probably wondering about the suits. The thing is, we had a little mixup. When I told Walter what color to buy, he thought I said dark *brown*. But what I really said was dark *blue*."

"Dark blue," Harvey said. "I understand." Edmunds was relieved. Harvey led them to a big Buick in the parking garage. He had a quality of deep distress about him; he was terribly gaunt, as though some private sorrow were eating away his flesh. "I want to show you what we're up against," he said once they were all in his car. He took them on a tour of the Tenderloin. It was a district of X-rated movies and adult bookstores, of winos sleeping on beds of broken glass. They saw bums, pimps, muggers, and thieves; they watched in awe as a kid about their own age stuck a needle into his arm and then rolled back his eyes in stunned pleasure. "There's nothing the police can do about it," Harvey said. "This is just daily business down here."

Harvey himself lived outside the city, in the suburb of San Mateo. His



"Hi. I'm Larry Hoskins as portrayed by me."

"You missed the gold play, you missed the real-estate boom and the market upturn, and you're probably missing something else this very minute."

• •

house had a big front lawn, on which two ceramic dwarfs were resting on their elbows and smoking pipes. He put Edmunds and Davis in a panelled bedroom in the finished basement. Before dinner, they played Ping-Pong in another basement room with Harvey's adopted son, who was fourteen and would be going on his own missionary effort in a few years. "Wouldn't it be funny if you got sent to Utah?" Davis said with a laugh. Davis had blue eyes behind round steel-rimmed glasses—eyes like lakes or rivers. Mrs. Harvey called everybody to the table. She was a stout woman who was built like a monument. She served meat and potatoes. The milk came in a pitcher. Edmunds' appetite was not very good, on account of the bumpy plane ride, and Davis kept irritating him by wolfing down everything in sight and talking about things that Edmunds felt were insignificant. Finally, he set his napkin next to his plate and said, "You'd think they didn't feed Walter at home."

"It's a compliment to the cook," said Mrs. Harvey.

"I'm feeling a little sick," Edmunds said. "Could I be excused so I can go to bed?"

In the bedroom, Edmunds undressed, got into his pajamas, and hung up his suit, checking it over for lint. He was eager to begin canvassing the city. What he had seen in the Tenderloin had convinced him that there were thousands of potential converts around. He had never understood why, when the message of the church was so simple and appealing, more people hadn't taken it to heart. You had to wonder if people didn't prefer to live like pigs, if they didn't wallow in filth by choice.

Edmunds was so tired that he drifted right to sleep, but a loud, crashing noise woke him in the middle of the night. He flipped on his lamp and saw that Davis was missing from the bed across the room. He walked into the hallway and then toward an open door at its end. The door led into the garage, where Davis was lying on the concrete, touching his fingers to a bruise on his forehead.

"I was looking for the bathroom," Davis said.

"It's the other way," Edmunds said. "Why didn't you turn on the light?"

"Couldn't find it."

The garage was filled with cardboard cartons. Each one was marked—powdered milk, sugar, flour, canned goods, freeze-dried meals. Edmunds remembered how at dinner Morris Harvey had said that his family was ready for anything—race war, nuclear war, it didn't matter. "Survival supplies," Edmunds said, sitting on a carton.

"I was having a nightmare," Davis said as he rubbed his bruise. "I kept seeing those faces from this afternoon. But they were more ugly, you know what I mean? I could hear them moaning."

"You ate too much. Didn't I warn you to go slow?"

"I'm afraid, Donald."

"What are you afraid of?"

Davis shrugged. "I don't know if I can help those people," he said.

"You can help them. You've just got to be tough about it."

"What if the world is coming to an end? I don't want to die."

"The world is *not* coming to an end," Edmunds said. He knew this was true. He went over to Davis; they shared a moment of silent prayer.

In the morning, and every morning after that, Harvey dropped them somewhere in the city on his way to work, and they walked from door to door with leaflets and brochures, trying to spread the message. Edmunds, who had a statistical mind, kept track of their record on a clipboard. It was not very impressive. In their first six weeks, they had eighty-two polite conversations, but a polite conversation could not be counted as a success unless it resulted in some kind of positive commitment, like an invitation into a home or apartment. They had received just nine such invitations. Of the nine people who invited them in, five were strictly lonely. Three were genuinely interested in religious philosophy and the message of the church but refused to become converts. The ninth was a crazy woman who gave them doughnuts and made them watch as she held up her dog's front paws and forced him to dance on his hind legs.

One afternoon, after several more disappointments, they found themselves in a poor neighborhood, in front of a housing project that was in such shocking disrepair that it appeared to have been bombed and strafed. The project consisted of several two-story concrete buildings painted a dull industrial green and arranged in a semicircle on the treeless side of an adjacent hill. The windows in the buildings were broken or boarded up, and many of the doors had come unhinged and flapped in the breeze. Cars without tires, without seats or mirrors, or even engines, were parked here and there along the pitted streets.

"Looks like they had a war or something," Davis said.

Edmunds checked his map. He wanted Silbert Terrace. It was just ahead, in the middle of the project. "Quit worrying so much," he told Davis. "Who's going to listen to you if you act scared?"

Out of the buildings came juky music, booming from portable stereo radios—expensive radios, which seemed incongruous amid the general ruin. "They must steal 'em," Edmunds said, when he saw a slender man in a leather jacket emerge from an apartment carrying a booming box by its handle. The man's apartment had no door at all, just a thin pink bedspread nailed into the frame. He glared at Edmunds and muttered something under his breath—some kind of curse. Edmunds ignored him, but the words seemed to float into Davis and upset his balance. He tripped over a clump of weeds sprouting through a sidewalk crack and fell down. His knee poked through his pants, scratched and speckled with blood.

"Why don't you look where you're going?" Edmunds hissed.

"The faces," Davis said, rubbing his knee. "It's like my dream again."

"I don't want to hear about any dream, Walter. I swear, sometimes I think you mess up on purpose."

They walked on. Some little boys in tattered sweatshirts were tossing a football around and yelled at them. "Hey you!" the boys yelled. "Hey you Misters, where'd you get those suits?" Edmunds waved and kept walking, being patient. Then he felt the football strike him in the small of the back. He bent to pick it up. It was made of rubber, not pigskin. He worked his fingers into the fake stitches and called to the boys. "You go on out for a pass," he said. When they didn't move, he fanned the ball back and forth with his arm. "C'mon," he shouted. "Go on out." The boys ran off in a pack, and Edmunds threw them a perfect spiral, which drifted gracefully to earth. He was pleased with himself. "That was a victory," he said.

They came at last to Silbert Terrace. It was not a bad block by project standards. It had a tufted recreation area, where children were playing on swings and slides. None of the apartments had buzzers or bells, so Edmunds and Davis had to knock when they found a door; if the door was missing, they whistled. The reception they got surprised them. Almost everybody suspected that they were from the welfare department or some other government agency, and they had to show their Utah driver's licenses before people would believe that they didn't want to cause trouble.

"Trouble is what we're here to help with," Davis said to a middle-aged man whose T-shirt had ridden up his belly.

The man accepted a leaflet. "I don't have no money to give," he said.

"It's free. You take it now."

For a few seconds, it seemed that the man might invite them in, but he hesitated on the brink, and then said, "Well, yessir, thank you," and vanished into the gloom.

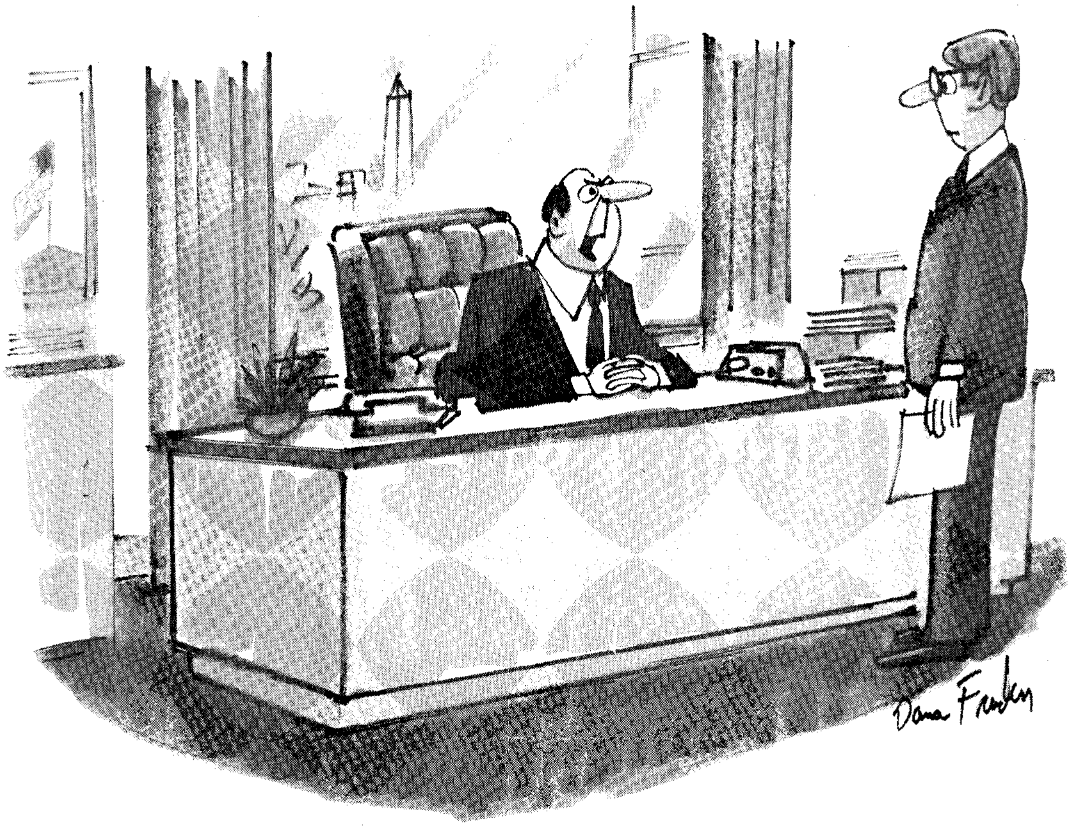
AT the very next apartment, their luck changed. The man who answered their knock had splotched red eyes and a loose handshake. His skin was yellowish. A slip of paper taped to his door informed them that he was Lister Owens.

"I'd be glad for some company," he said, drawing them into a dark, musty studio apartment that smelled of cooking grease. A couple of suitcases filled with dirty clothes rested at the base of a huge color-TV console. The TV was tuned to a game show. Owens adjusted the volume, then sat on a rickety, vinyl-covered couch and put on a pair of sunglasses.

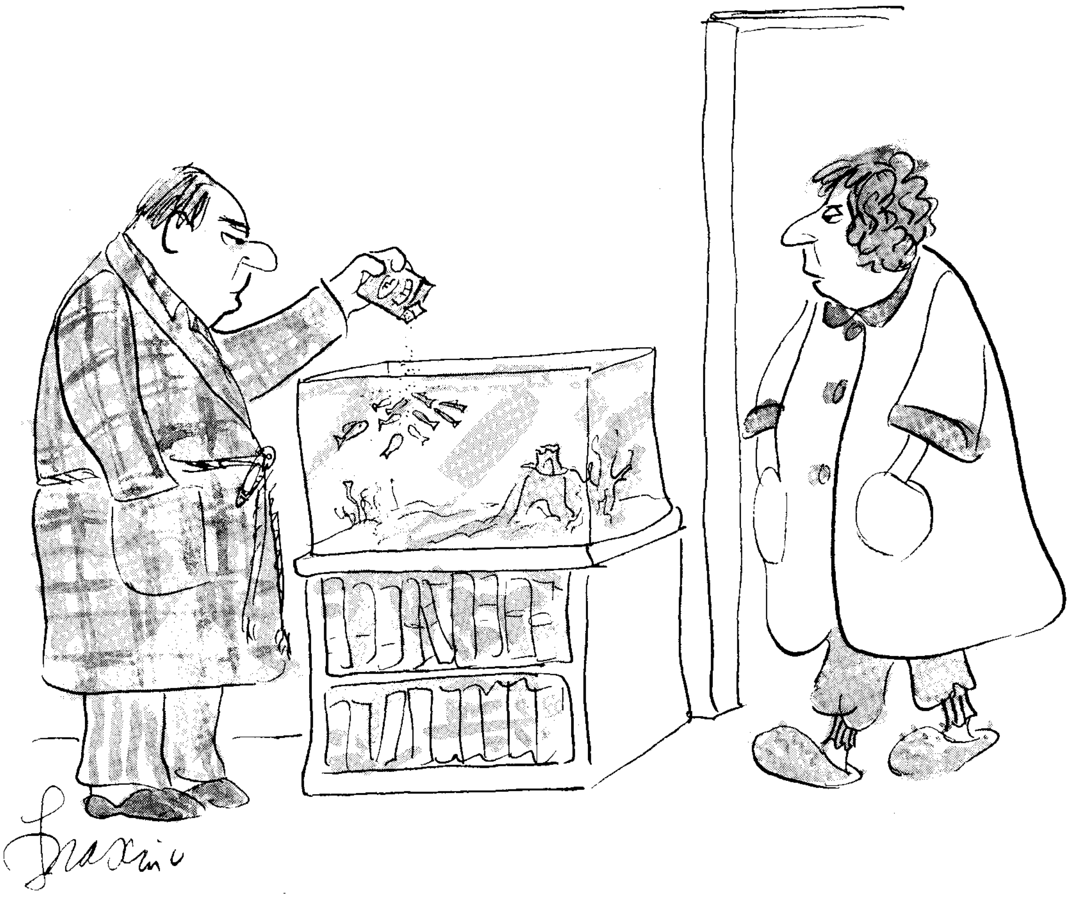
"You're getting a good picture," Davis said nervously, making conversation.

Owens smiled a little. "I'm on the cable," he said. He sipped some colorless liquid from a teacup.

Edmunds was anxious to begin. He looked around for a chair, but the couch was the only piece of furniture in the room, so he joined Owens on it. His



"Gormley, when I ask a simplistic question I expect a simplistic answer."



"How are your prisoners today?"

weight, added to Owens' weight, put too much stress on the spindly legs, and the couch collapsed.

"Now you done it," Owens said, without much enthusiasm.

"I'm sorry," Edmunds said. "I didn't know it was weak."

"I'm not blamin' you, hear? It's just another thing that happened."

Davis was looking at the broken leg. "This can be glued," he said.

"Glue," said Owens, chuckling to himself. He fiddled with his sunglasses, bringing them down lower on his nose.

Edmunds slid along the collapsed couch until he was next to Owens. He showed his driver's license, and then, as calmly as he could, he told Owens about the church and its message and how it provided help in times of trouble.

"Don't you think I know about the church?" Owens asked. "Don't you think the lady was a *church* person? She sang in the choir."

"Who sang in the choir?"

"My wife did."

"Where is she now?" Davis asked.

"She's gone. She just took my baby boy and flew away."

"Flew away?"

Owens nodded. "Right into the sky," he said.

"The church we're talking about," Edmunds said, clearing his throat, "it's a different church."

"Where'd you say it's at? Utah?"

"Well, it's there, but it's here, too." Edmunds grinned and touched Owens lightly on the shoulder. "You see? Nothing can be that bad."

"I saw a TV film about Utah," Owens said. "It looked nice."

Davis set the broken couch leg on the floor by the suitcases. He studied Owens' face and tried to imagine that beneath the yellowish skin there was something he knew about—some common desire or longing. "It *is* nice," he said. "We're real close to the desert. You can ride around in your dune buggy and nobody'll bother you. The fishing's great. You should see the mountains."

"I'd like to," Owens said. "Only mountains I ever saw was on the TV. They got any work there?"

"What do you do?"

"I did construction work until they laid me off." He pointed at the TV. "Look there now," he said. "Sucker just won himself ten thousand dollars."

"They're always building new buildings in Salt Lake," Davis said.

"This church, it'd be helping me with a job?" Owens asked. "Because I could do with a church like that."

Edmunds was getting excited. It seemed to him that Owens might possibly be encouraged to attend a service. "Walter," he said. "We could talk to Mr. Harvey. He must know about thousands of jobs."

"Who's this Harvey man?" Owens scratched his cheek. "He with the unemployment?"

"Never mind," Edmunds said. He threw an arm wide, as though he were sweeping away debris. "You don't have to live like this, Mr. Owens," he said.

"Do tell," said Owens. He got to his feet. "I'll be makin' some more tea now," he said. "Would you all like a cup?"

THE church discouraged its members from drinking tea or coffee or any other harmful or potentially intoxicating beverage, but Edmunds thought that under the circumstances he should forget about the rule, since he'd already insulted Owens by busting his couch. "That'd be fine," he said, elbowing Davis. They followed Owens into a tiny kitchen alcove and watched him fill a dented pan with rusty tap water. He put the saucepan on a two-burner hot plate. There was a used tea bag on the counter, and Owens picked it up daintily and lowered it into the water. "Be about five minutes," he said. "Meantime, tell me more about those mountains."

Davis did his best. He described the buttes and how they turn flame-red at sunset, and described, too, the pinnacles and arches and how when you were hiking among them you felt as if you were exploring the surface of the moon. But he kept being distracted by the tea bag bobbing in the pan. Shreds of old tea were coming out of it. The idea of drinking Owens' brew was repulsive to him; he couldn't imagine what it would taste like.

"The moon," said Owens, stirring the tea. "That's where those astronauts played golf." He threw his stirring spoon into the sink, then faked a golf swing. "Bingo," he said. "Right in the eye of old Mr. Moon." This gave him the giggles, and he laughed until the water started to boil over. "Oh, no you don't," he said, grabbing the saucepan. He removed it from the heat, lifted out the tea bag, and poured an ounce or so of thin tea into his cup. He added a pour of vodka from a jug on top of the fridge. Next, he opened a cupboard and brought down fresh cups for his guests. Obviously, they were special to him; they were china in a blue willow pattern. He filled them almost to the brim and passed them over. Edmunds crooked a finger through the handle of his cup, but Davis, who was anticipating a disgusting task, gripped his cup whole, without thinking, and promptly burned himself. The cup slipped free and dropped to the floor.

"Oh my," said Owens, as he retrieved it. A tiny piece had chipped off the lip. He shook his head and said to Davis, "I know you didn't mean it."

"I didn't," Davis said. "But I'd still like to pay for it."

"Money can't fix something like this. This was the last good thing of hers I had, and now it's spoiled."

"Mr. Owens," said Edmunds, seeing another opportunity to take advantage of the situation. "Maybe you'd like to talk about what happened with your wife."

Owens was irritated. "I already told you," he said. "They laid me off. One month, two months. Repo man came around, took this, took that. So she left me. She flew away, right into the sky."

"She didn't really fly," Edmunds said.

"You don't believe it?"

"I'm sorry," said Edmunds, getting a little irritated himself. "I just don't. It's silly."

"I'll prove it to you," Owens said. He yanked open a kitchen drawer and rifled through its contents, piling knives, forks, thumbtacks, and empty tape cylinders on the counter until he found what he was after. It was a photograph, a Polaroid snapshot. He gave it to Davis. "You check it out," he said.

Davis was in bad shape. All the broken things were haunting him. He was suddenly afraid of Owens, of what the photo might reveal. When he looked, he saw a woman who seemed to be floating through the air. She wore a rich red robe; two gold wings sprouted from her shoulder blades.

"Is it like I said?" Owens asked. "Let me hear you now."

Davis wanted to run away. "She's flying," he agreed.

This was too much for Edmunds. He snatched the photo and examined it closely. It was true that the woman appeared to be flying, but only because Owens had turned the photo sideways. When it was right side up, displayed on the vertical instead of the horizontal, it showed a choir singer who was acting a part in some religious pageant.

Edmunds was outraged. "I guess you think it's funny," he said, deliberately laying the photo on top of the wet tea bag.

"Say, listen now," Owens said. "Don't be angry. I was joking with you."

"You call that a joke?" Edmunds asked. "Somebody like you, you don't deserve our help."

"What you going to help me with?"

Edmunds was silent, but Davis, recalling his nightmare, and the ugly faces, said, "What if the world is coming to an end?"

Owens pulled his sunglasses even lower on his nose. He took a big swallow of vodka tea. "That's old news," he said. "The world's been and gone. Why don't you let me take your picture?"

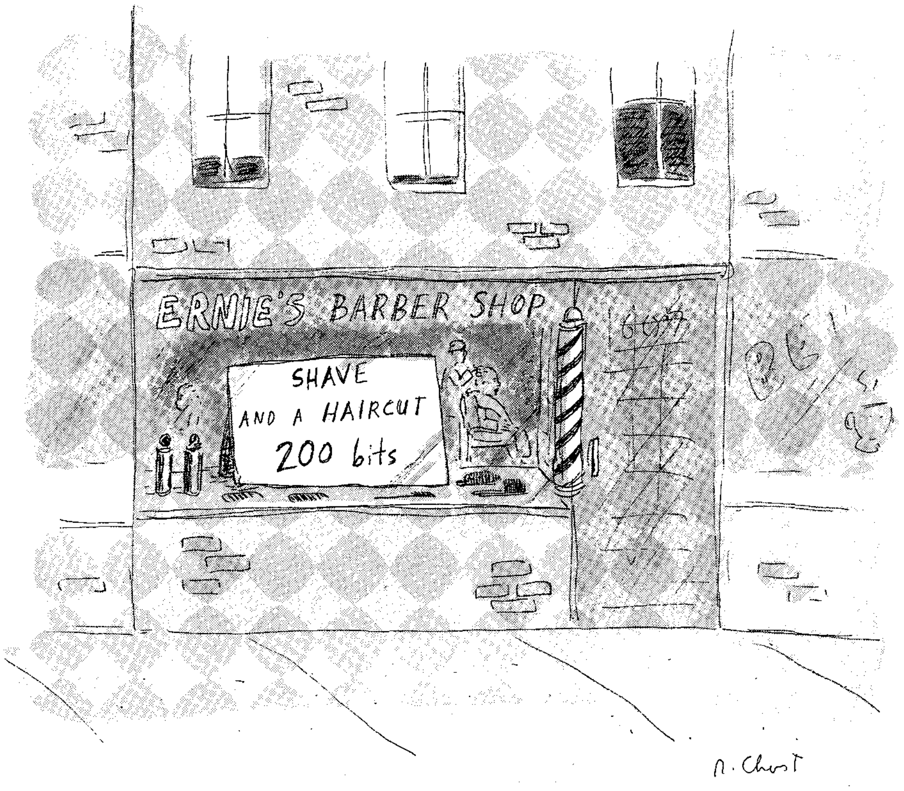
"My picture?"

"Sure," Owens said. "Both the two of you. I'll make it pretty. Hand me down that camera, will you?" he asked, pointing to a kitchen shelf. But when Davis reached for the camera, Owens stopped him. "Wait," he said. "You better let me get it. You touch it, it's bound to break." He led his subjects back into the living room and positioned them near the TV. "Whether or not you smile is up to you," he said.

"Should we smile?" Davis asked Edmunds.

"Smile if you want to," Edmunds said. "I haven't decided yet." Before he could decide, Owens snapped the picture.

—Bill Barich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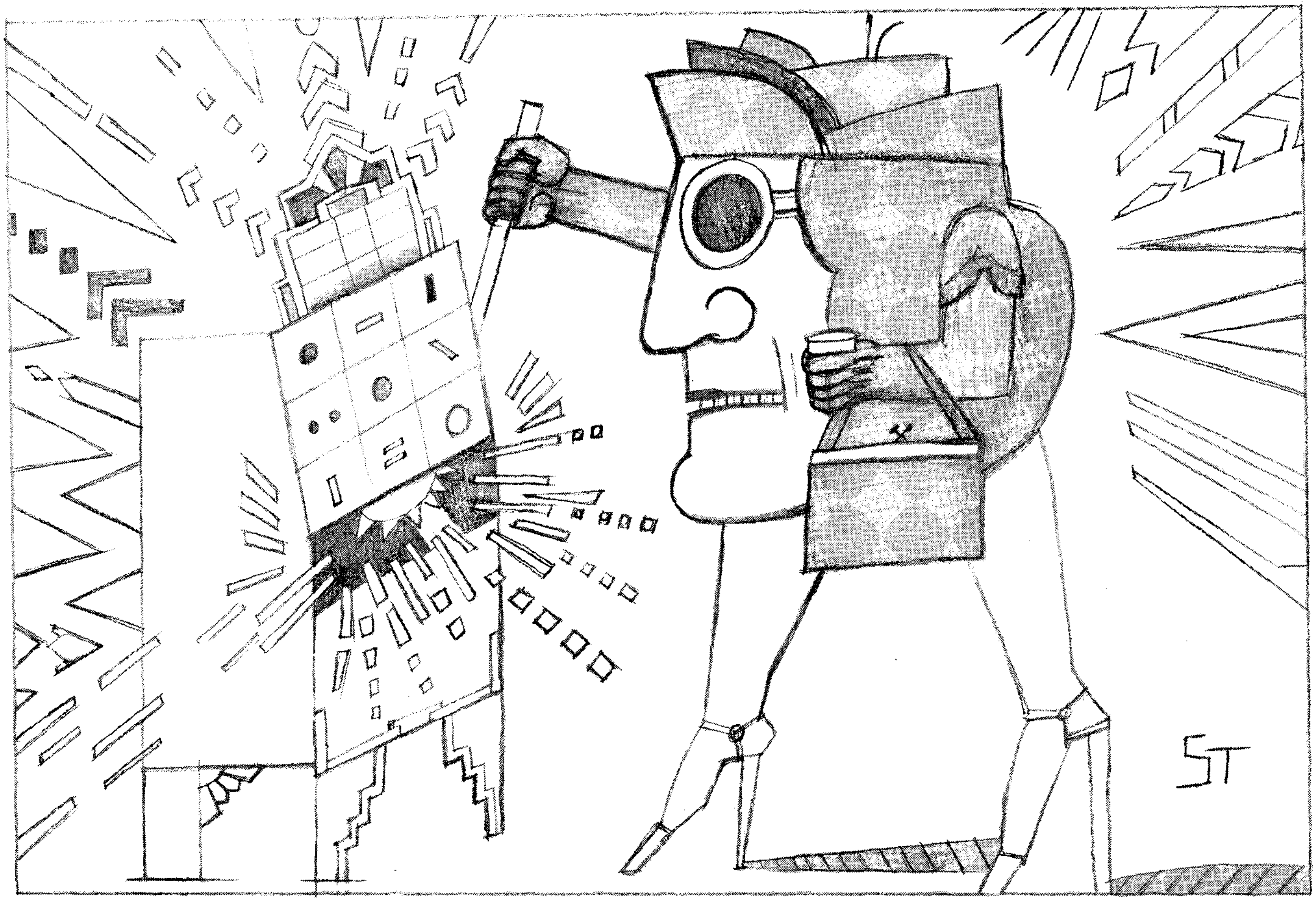


Doyle Brunson, twice winner of the annual World Series of Poker, in Las Vegas, was born in 1933 in Longworth, a tiny farming village in West Texas. His father worked on the land and at the local cotton gin. "We weren't that poor," he says. "We were maybe above average for our community, in that we had plenty to eat and were never really under financial strain, like some of them. But still we never had an abundance of anything. If there was something extra you wanted, you had to get out and hustle for it—chop cotton or work in the construction industry." Brunson paid for his higher education with an athletic scholarship at Hardin-Simmons, a Baptist college in Abilene. He was the star of the basketball team, selected by a basketball magazine as one of the top college players in the country, and courted by the Minneapolis Lakers. He was also a brilliant miler—the best in Texas when he was in high school, and a possible contender for a place on the Olympic team. "I could just run and run," he said. "I never seemed to get tired."

But Brunson's athletic career came abruptly to an end the summer before he was due to graduate, when he was back home working at the Sweetwater plant of U.S. Gypsum. A huge pile of Sheetrock slid outward while he was unloading it, and snapped his right leg in two places. The leg was in plaster for two years, and his career as a professional athlete was over. He stayed on at Hardin-Simmons to take an M.A. in administrative education, with the aim of one day becoming the principal of a county school, but the only position he was offered was that of a high-school basketball coach, at a salary of forty-eight hundred dollars a year. Since he was already making more than that in college poker games, he took a job as a business-machine salesman at five times the salary. It didn't last. There was a poker game in progress in the back room of one of the first offices he called on; he sat down at it, and in three hours had won a month's salary. After that, there seemed only one way to go.

The first time I met Brunson, soon after the start of the 1981 World Series of Poker, he was standing with his wife, Louise, by the elevators at the Golden Nugget, in Las Vegas. Louise is a small, plump, talkative woman in her middle forties, with a round, pleasant face and an open smile, which she uses a lot. While we chatted, Brunson dug around absent-mindedly in his pockets and finally pulled out a large handful of chips, mostly black hundreds. Louise cupped her hands to receive them and giggled like a young girl. "What have I done to deserve this?" she asked. Brunson beamed at her.

Brunson is six feet three inches tall and weighs two hundred and eighty-two pounds—a hundred pounds more than when he was playing basketball. Most of the extra weight is in his belly and his buttocks, and he is fighting it in a halfhearted way. For a year, he has been on a diet that forbids red meat. Red meat, however, does not seem to be his problem. At the poker table, he gulps down milk drinks topped with whipped cream while the other players sip mineral water. During an afternoon break, he slips into

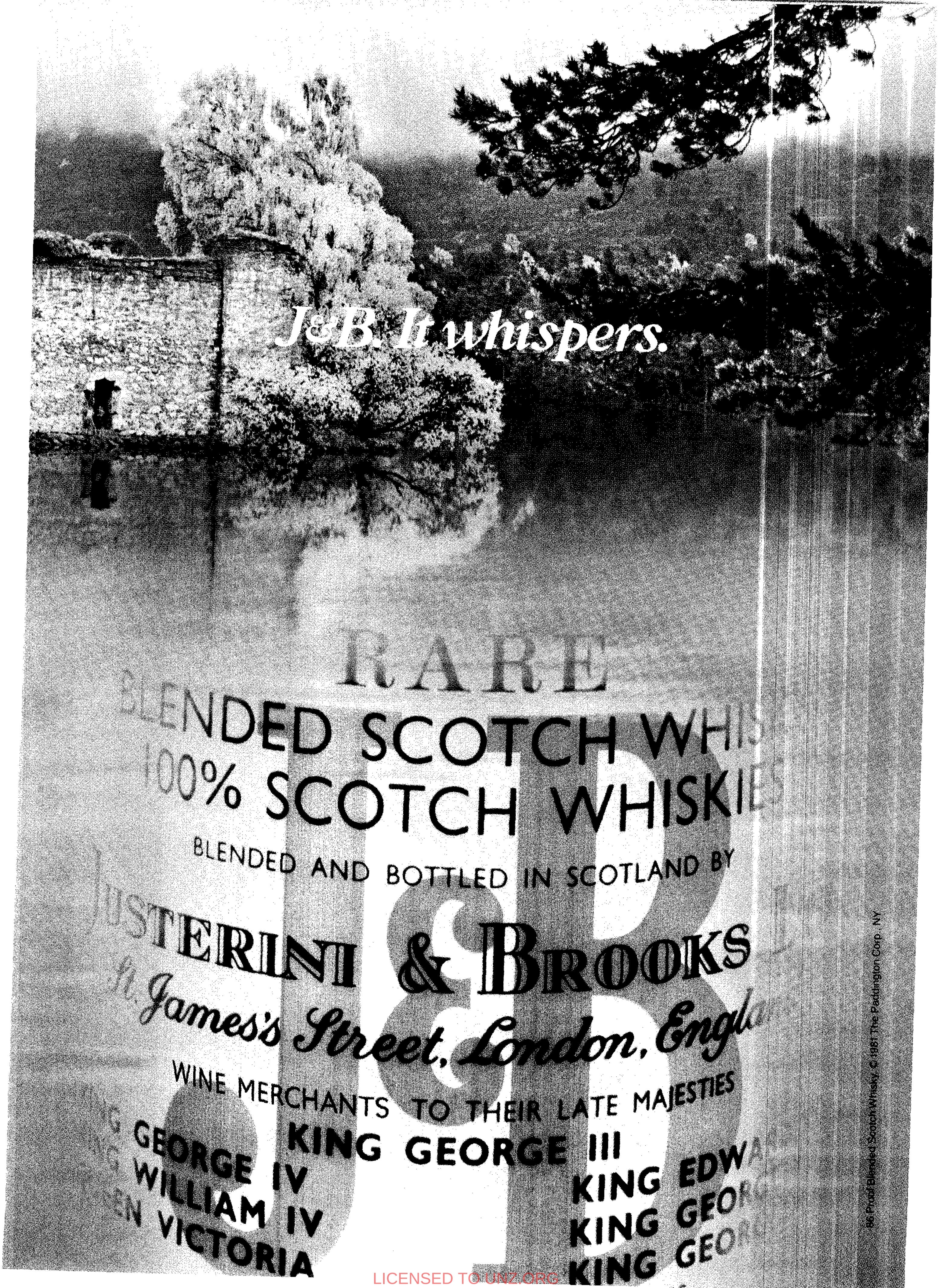
"B. K. Howley here—cordless."

• •

the Sombrero Room, the dining room at the Horseshoe, where a lavish buffet, covered with a white cloth, is already laid out for the evening meal. He glances slyly round the room, lifts one corner of the cloth, slides out a large wedge of chocolate cake, and goes out again, munching contentedly. "During the tournament, I eat four or five desserts a day," he once confided. "I just cain't keep away from that table." He smiles sweetly, sucking in his lower lip so that only his upper teeth show. The sweet smile, soft face, and great, portly frame, in its brown sports shirt and trousers flowing like a brown spinnaker, give him the air of a benign medieval abbot of some easygoing monastery. Yet, although his broken leg has left him with a permanent limp, he still plays golf to a single-figure handicap and claims he can outlast anyone except Jack Binion—one of the owners of Binion's Horseshoe Casino, where the World Series of Poker is held—on the tennis court or in the swimming pool. "I know it sounds silly," he said, "but I've been heavy all my life, yet I've never *felt* fat. I cain't run anymore, because of my leg, but I can do most everything anyone else can do. I guess what matters is the mental picture you have of yourself."

For many of the top professionals, poker has become a substitute for sport—something that they turn to when their physical edge has gone but that demands the same concentration, skill, and endurance and provides a channel for all their bottled-up competitiveness. "Discipline and stamina are what poker is all about, especially when you're competing with top players in games that go on a long time," said Brunson. "Because of my athletic background, I have a lot of both. Sometimes, when I've been playing for a couple of days, I get into a position where I'm uncomfortable. My leg, say, starts hurting a little bit. But I don't change position. I'll sit there and let it hurt, just as a reminder to make myself play good." Another example, perhaps, of the fortitude that poker players value so highly—a physical equivalent of the stoicism with which, on their way up, they endured the bad runs that wiped out their working capital.

Jack Binion calls the professionals "mental athletes." Certainly, in Brunson's mind, poker and sport are inextricably merged. His father—a sweet-tempered man, of whom Brunson speaks with great affection and who was a secret poker player, talented enough to put another son through college on his winnings—died when Brunson was twenty-five. For the next ten years, Brunson was on the road, travelling from game to game; for six of those ten years, he teamed up with Thomas (Amarillo Slim) Preston and Brian (Sailor) Roberts—a partnership that lasted until their joint six-figure bankroll was wiped out during a disastrous 1964 visit to Las Vegas. He speaks of his road years now as a prizefighter speaks of training camp—with a mixture of pride and dismay. "Those years are just a kind of blur," he says. "I barely remember them. But the only way you develop your poker skills and your sixth sense is by putting in a lot of hours. I once went a whole summer without seeing the sun. I would play all night, then sleep all day; go to bed at dawn, get up at sundown. I guess it was just humanly impossible to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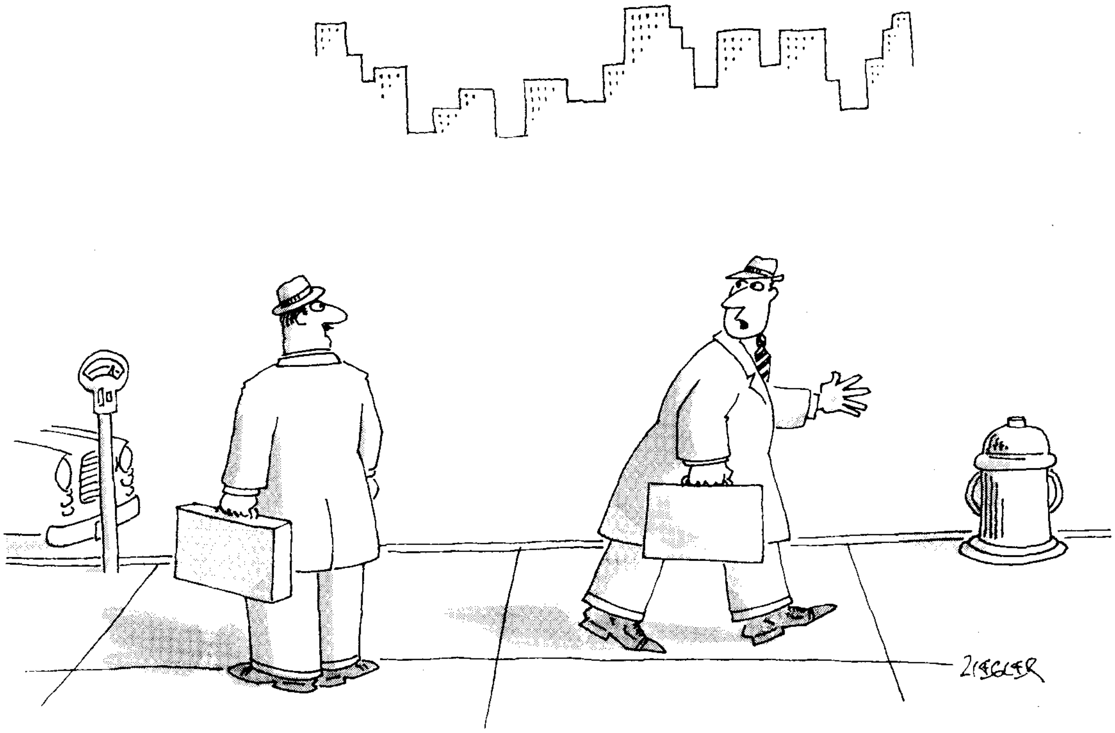
put in more hours than I did in those ten years. All I did was play poker and sleep and eat and, once in a while, grab a broad—like going to the grocery store.”



“Forget it, pal. I thought I recognized you, but, as it turns out, it was just your type that I recognized.”

That is not strictly accurate. Halfway through the decade, Brunson married, and that same year he almost died. Louise was working as a pharmacist in San Angelo, Texas, and he courted her—between games—for two years, during which she sold him every vitamin in the shop several times over. Because he was nearly thirty years old, she assumed he was married, and at first refused to go out with him. When that hurdle was cleared, there was the problem of his profession. “She asked me what I did, and I told her I was a bookmaker,” he said. “She thought I said ‘bookkeeper,’ so she told her mother I was an accountant.” He eventually explained the misunderstanding to her, but he does not say whether she ever enlightened her mother.

Four months after they married, in August of 1962, Brunson woke up with a sore throat and a lump on his neck the size of a pea. For three weeks, the local doctor fed him antibiotics, while the lump grew to the size of an egg. At that point, worry turned into panic—particularly since one of Brunson’s brothers had recently died of cancer. Doyle and Louise hurried to Fort Worth to consult a specialist. The specialist took one look, made reassuring noises, and operated the next day. The cancer was everywhere—in his stomach, his chest, his neck, and near the base of his brain, and was so heavy and so extensive that it was visible to the naked eye. They sewed him back together and told Louise that it was a question of weeks, not months. She was pregnant by then, and in the hope of keeping him alive long enough to see their child she arranged for further surgery, in Houston. There was no hope of saving him, but at least they might delay the cancer’s progress to his brain. The operation lasted eight hours and was successful. More important, when the surgeons opened him up again there was no trace at all of the cancer.

The doctors called it “a spontaneous remission;” they also called it “a miracle.” Certainly there seemed no rational explanation for what had happened. One moment, Brunson had been on the scaffold with the rope around his neck; the next, he was a free man. The two conditions seemed equally unreasonable. Later, Louise discovered that several friends had spoken to their pastors, and entire congregations had been praying for her husband’s recovery. She took it as a sign, and has since then been vigorously Christian—a force in the local church and deeply involved in foreign missions. Brunson himself reserves judgment; he rarely goes to church, but says, “I was brought up in a Christian home and never saw any reason to change the beliefs they taught me as a child.” He is also convinced—if only as a poker player—of the power of E.S.P.

Despite Brunson’s skepticism, the miracles continued. Shortly after their child, a daughter, was born, Louise developed a uterine tumor. A major operation was scheduled, but before it could take place all traces of the tumor had disappeared. She went on to have two more children. Then, when Doyla—the eldest was named after Brunson when it was reckoned that he would not live to see her—was twelve, she developed idiopathic scoliosis, acute curvature of the spine. Specialists were consulted, and alternative measures were considered: a body brace or a steel rod implanted in her spine. The best she could hope for was to be permanently crippled. But Louise consulted a famous faith healer, Kathryn Kuhlman, and organized a marathon prayer session. Within two weeks, the child’s spine had completely straightened of its own accord—one of only three known instances, Brunson says, of the affliction’s being cured without surgery.

It is a strange background for a master of one of the most realistic of all disciplines. Brunson acknowledges the strangeness, as he would acknowledge a miracle draw at the card table, but does not comment, although he does express pride in his wife’s good works. Of his own miracle, he says, “I never did think I was going to die. Just before I went to Houston for the second operation, my friends gathered from all over to say goodbye, so I took the hint and made out a list of pallbearers. It was real morbid. But in my heart I never believed it. Maybe that was because I was only thirty and at that age dying is something that happens to old people, not to you. Perhaps that attitude helped pull me through. As I see it, death has several stages: the first is disbelief, the last is acceptance. Well, I just refused to accept it. I'd been an athlete, see, and I'd always overcome everything I'd set my mind to. I guess I thought I could overcome death, too." In Brunson's case, physical strength became moral and mental toughness, as though he had decided that if death could not touch him nothing would. "My whole attitude toward life was different from that point on," he told me one day in Vegas. "I really began to enjoy it. Even though I still played poker a lot, I had an appreciation of things I'd never had before. Up until then, I'd just driven the white line from game to game, as if I had blinkers on. Now I began to notice the trees and the flowers and how blue the sky got."

Brunson also went on to an extraordinary winning streak after his recovery: fifty-three poker sessions in a row. It was as if nothing could resist the vitality unleashed by his brush with death. By the end of those fifty-three games, he had paid off all his medical bills and had enough left over to keep his family in comfort for years.

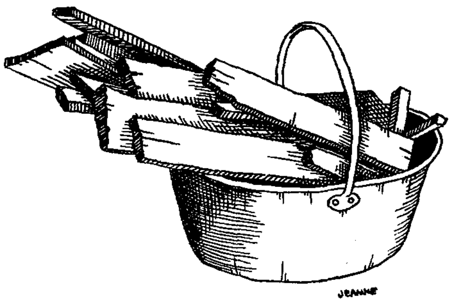
All that is left of Brunson's cancer is scars on his neck. His face is heavily jowled and is balanced slightly to the left. Under the right jawline, running back toward the ear, is a large indentation covered with grafted skin, like a crater lake skimmed over with ice. A little in front of that is a gigantic L-shaped scar, which he acquired a couple of years ago when surgeons lifted back the skin to cut out another growth—this time, mercifully, a benign lymph node.

These brutal confrontations with cancer have confirmed Brunson in his belief in himself as a winner, invincible. Death is, quite simply, a matter that no longer concerns him; instead, it seems to have intensified for him the image he had of himself when he was young. In 1980, he went back to a class reunion at his high school, Sweetwater High. This is what he said about it: "Age hasn't meant anything to me until very recently; I felt the same at twenty-five and thirty-five and forty. Then I went back to this high-school reunion and saw how everyone else had aged, and I knew I'd aged, too. But I also saw that some of those guys were ready to sit down and die right there. O.K., you cain't help how you look physically, provided you take care of yourself. But there we all were, forty-six years old, and some of us were ready to die and others were still youthful, just as they were at school. That made me realize I never want to get old mentally. I'd like to stay like Johnny Moss. He's seventy-five now, and in the last year or two he's begun to look a little older, but he doesn't think old at all. Mentally, he's still a young man: he stays up two or three nights on end playing cards, he thinks about the broads, he has plans for the future. I hope I'll always be that way."

Apart from the scars, the one remaining trace of Brunson's run-in with death is an obsession with punctuality. I discovered this when I arranged to meet him for breakfast at seven o'clock one day. I was up at a quarter past six, but as I was leaving my room someone called me from New York on business. The call dragged on, and I got to the Sombrero Room twenty minutes late. Brunson was most of the way through his breakfast, and nodded curtly when I sat down, his face shut as tight as a bank vault. Although I apologized, and explained what had happened, he clearly did not believe me. He spoke little, but his irritation seemed to fill the empty restaurant like a fog, and was a long time dispersing. The following morning, the situation was reversed: I was there at seven sharp, he arrived at seven-thirty. When he realized his mistake—he thought we had changed the time—he seemed genuinely shocked, apologized more than was necessary, and returned to the subject later, this time angrily. "To me, a man's word is his bond," he said. "When you say you're going to be somewhere at a certain time, that's your word, and if you don't keep the appointment your word's not worth a damn. I feel very strongly about it."

The previous afternoon, I had watched him count out two hundred hundred-dollar bills from the gigantic wad in his pocket and hand them over to another gambler affably, without a sign of annoyance, so I asked, "Why *so* strongly?"

"The most valuable thing I've got is my time," he answered. "It's more valuable to me than money or anything else."



It was the only sign he ever gave of being a man who feels he is living on borrowed time.

We had arranged to meet at such an ungodly—and un-Vegas—hour because for five days, beginning May 4th, the Doyle Brunson Invitational Golf Tournament was being held at the tight little course behind the Dunes Hotel, and Brunson took me along to watch. The tournament does not have the approval of the Professional Golfers' Association and the P.G.A. Tour, since their rules specify that the players not involve themselves in gambling. Brunson grumbled about this all the way out to the course. He was riled by the hypocrisy. "All golfers gamble, even if it's only for a buck or two," he said. "What difference does the scale make?" But he was also riled because a Baptist upbringing dies hard, and he is touchy about the shady public image of his chosen profession. The year before—"1980 was my year of reunions"—he had gone home to Longworth and run into his ancient first-grade teacher. She fixed him reproachfully with her pale-blue eyes and asked him what he did. He told me, "I said, 'Play poker,' and she just looked at me and shook her head and said, 'My goodness, can't you find something better to do?' " He, too, shook his head, mournfully. "That's the attitude of the whole community," he went on. "They're country people, good people, but they don't understand that there are ways of life different from the ones they are used to, and they won't accept them." To be very rich as well as respected and famous in certain circles yet still to be looked down on by what gamblers call "the straight world" is an irony that Brunson is unable to appreciate.

Despite the P.G.A., several dozen young golf professionals had entered the tournament, and a dozen or so gamblers had gathered for the action. They milled around in the clubhouse while Brunson lumbered out to the first tee and back, to work out the odds. "I watch them hit one ball, then I make a lineup," he said. He took notes of the bets on the back of an envelope and paid the winners in cash as soon as the game was over.

Brunson spent a great deal of time that day in consultation with a little man called Billy. Billy had a full head of gray hair, an assertive backside, and a sly satyr's face—eyes sharp and slitted, the corners of his mouth upturned

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at some permanent secret joke. I heard him say, "I bet ten thousand on each man."

"You like that two-to-one bet, you got it," Brunson answered.

Later, Brunson told me that Billy was "the biggest sports bettor in the world." He sounded respectful, and I wondered how big is big, since Brunson himself once lost a hundred and eighty thousand dollars on a single hole of golf, and often plays for two or three hundred thousand dollars a round. "Doyle's played for more in one day than Watson and Nicklaus win in a whole year," a friend of Brunson's had told me.

Out on the course, the sun shone on the dew, and the cool air smelled of cut grass. Birds called sweetly to each other from the tattered palms and junipers. The mountains circling the horizon shimmered in the haze. "That's not haze," said Brunson. "That's pollution." Nevertheless, it seemed a long way from downtown Vegas, alias Glitter Gulch.

Most of the regulars from the high-stakes poker games at Binion's were out there to enjoy the fresh air and the action. They buzzed from hole to hole and game to game in white-canopied carts, like a swarm of demented insects. One couple, however, stayed at a sedate and watchful distance: a battered giant and a tiny, monkey-faced old man with a heavy Navajo bracelet on one wrist, a gold Patek Philippe watch on the other, and, on that forearm, a gaudy tattoo of a dancing girl wearing a sombrero. The other gamblers eyed them respectfully from a distance, but during the five days the tournament lasted I never saw the two exchange a word—with each other or with anyone else. When I finally asked Brunson if this odd couple was a Mafia capo and his bodyguard, he refused to be drawn out. "I don't even know for sure if the mob exists," he said. "But out here if you eat a pizza they think you're tied in with Chicago."

The officials were monitoring the games with two-way radios, and the gamblers continually buzzed up to them to ascertain the state of play elsewhere on the course. Then they would swoop down on Brunson to add to their bets. Billy paused briefly by our cart. "Plus six for twenty," he muttered, and swooped away again. Brunson made a note on the back of his envelope.

Brunson watched critically while one of the players three-putted. As the man walked dejectedly from the green to the next tee, Brunson asked him how he stood. "Three down," the man answered. His scarlet trousers and white sweater seemed inappropriate to his gloom. Brunson patted his shoulder like a fatherly bear. "Don't you worry none," he said. "You're doing just fine." As we drove away, he smiled his sweet smile and shifted his large, soft body contentedly on the cart seat. "That's goo-ood," he said. "I betted on the other guy."

The cool, delectable air and the fun of betting on other people's play seemed to loosen everyone up. Jack Straus, a witty Texan who is also a formidable professional poker player, drove up to us and launched into one of his innumerable stories. "Remember the time, Doyle, I wanted to take you off to that little island?" Brunson grinned sheepishly and looked away, pretending to watch a distant golfer square up for his approach shot. Straus turned to me, in full flow now. "The idea was, we'd rent a condominium and play golf and fish from early morning to night," he said. "We'd stock the icebox with salads and fruit and fresh vegetables and maybe take off some weight. But Doyle's wife is very religious, and somehow she got the idea we were going down there to chase girls. Well, Doyle was like a ninety-year-old man accused of rape—he wanted to plead guilty. So there was some kind of argument. Finally, I told her that if I was going to try to grab a girl, having Doyle along would be like having a dead chicken hanging around my neck. And that settled it, though we never did go. Right, Doyle?" Brunson nodded cheerfully, sucking his lower lip.

At one of the short holes, Walter (Puggy) Pearson, a fifty-two-year-old professional who won the World Series of Poker in 1973, stood next to Brunson, sizing the players up beadily along a gigantic cigar. The first man drove impeccably, and the ball landed just short of the green. His opponent took a practice swing and addressed his ball.

"How much on him?" Pearson whispered.

"Five to four."

"I'll take a dime of that action"—a dime in Las Vegas parlance being a thousand dollars. The second player swung, the ball soared, faltered, dropped into a bunker. The player rubbed his lower back and began talking to his opponent and an official. Then he turned on his heel, climbed into his cart, and drove off toward the clubhouse. The gamblers clustered around the official; the player, he announced, had pulled a muscle and conceded the game.

"God *damn*," Pearson said.

Brunson pulled out his envelope and scribbled, "Puggy—$1,000."

"That guy," Pearson muttered angrily. "He's got more pooch in him than a cocker spaniel."

"Pooch" or "dog"—short for "underdog"—is gamblers' slang for "loser," and a ruling concept among the high-stakes players. "Doyle Brunson has absolutely no dog in him," an oil man from Albuquerque told me. "He'll make bad matches at golf, he'll play uphill, but he'll shoot out of it. It's the damnedest thing. He's a single-figure handicapper, but he'll take a guy that's two or three strokes better and play him for so much money that

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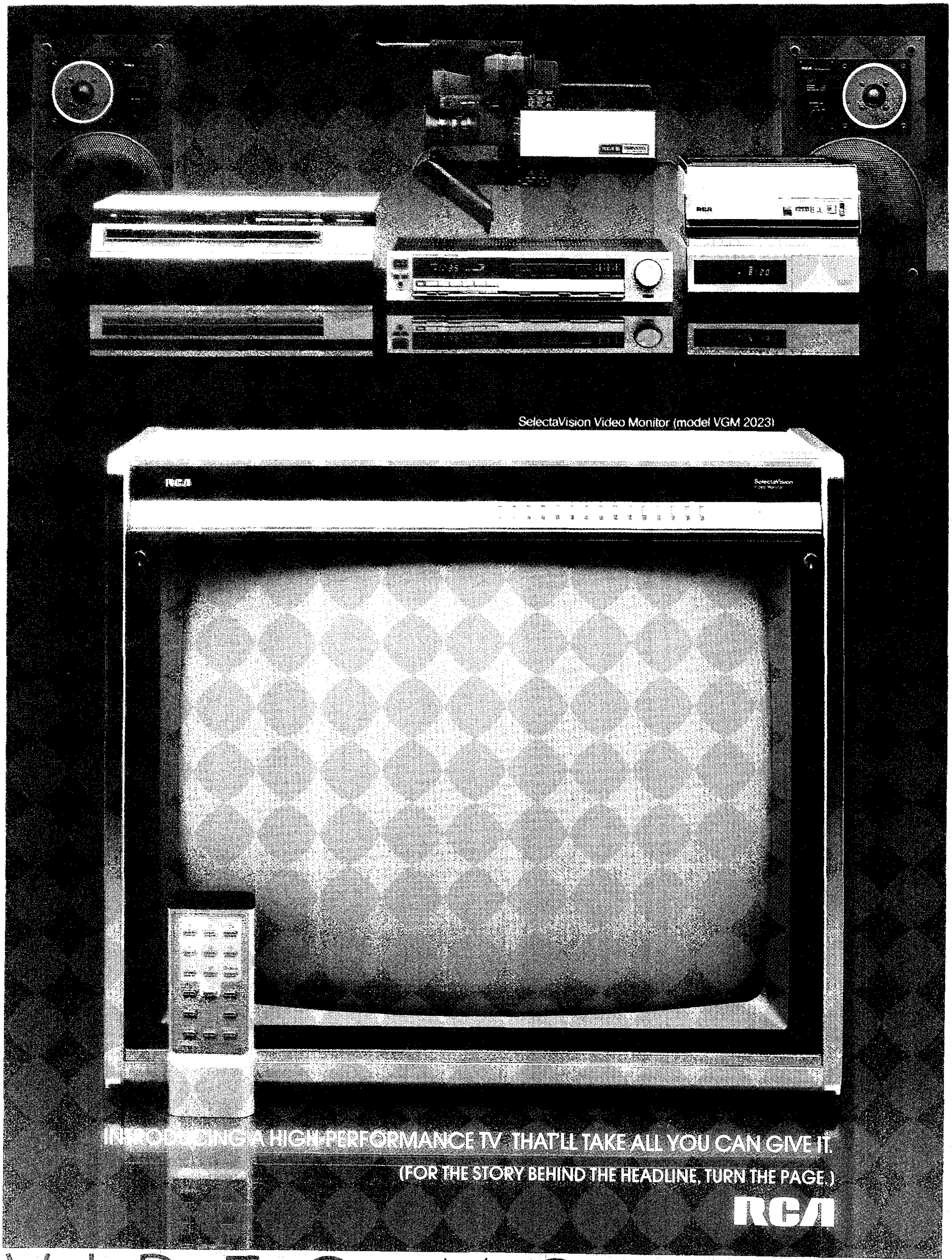
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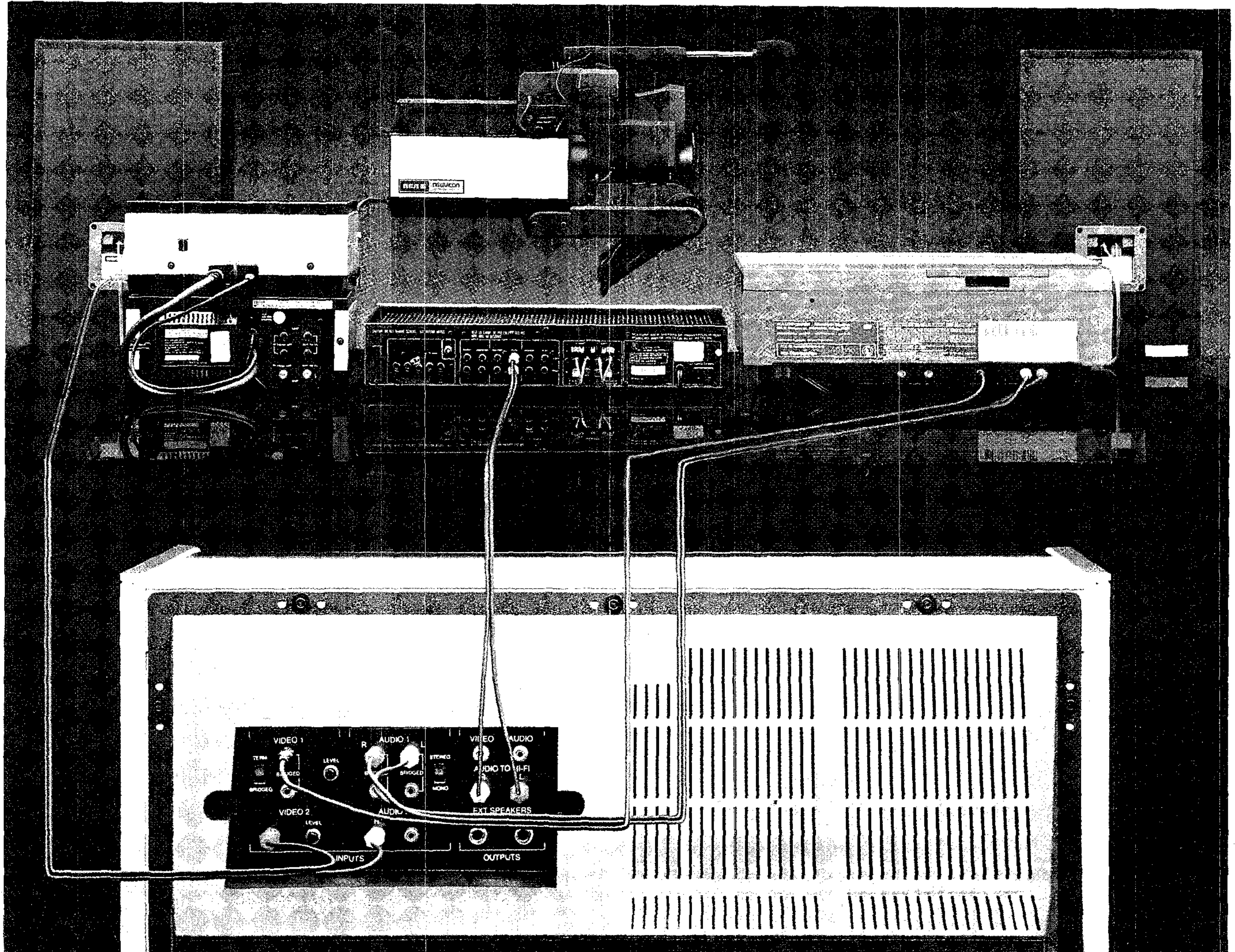

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the other guy dogs it and he doesn't. He plays above his ability if the money is high enough, where the normal reaction is to play worse when you play for more. For Doyle, a ten-thousand-dollar Nassau is like you and me going to the soda fountain." A Nassau is actually three bets for the agreed sum: in a ten-thousand-dollar Nassau, the player who wins the most holes in the first nine wins ten thousand dollars, the player who wins the most in the second nine wins ten thousand, and the player who wins the most holes over all wins a further ten thousand. "Most guys playing for that kind of money will dog it, but Doyle's got no fear. That guy's not afraid of anything."

An example: We were standing at the eighteenth green watching a match which at that point was even. The player farthest from the hole made a long, brilliant putt, and the ball rolled in. Brunson applauded with the rest. The other player's ball was only two feet from the flag; he had merely to tap it in to halve the hole. He squinted along the green, made one smooth practice shot, then hunched over the ball, concentrating fiercely. But at the point of impact he seemed to hesitate, and the ball rolled past the lip of the hole. There was a kind of massed sigh from the spectators; it seemed that they had all been holding their breath and then released it at the same moment. Brunson shrugged. "I lost eighty thousand betting on this game," he said equably. He added, "Let's go congratulate the loser. Everyone congratulates the winner."

"He's got a heart bigger than a watermelon," said the man from Albuquerque. "His generosity is unheard of in this cutthroat business. Maybe that's how he got to the top."

It was past noon, and the oil man and I were standing by Brunson's Lincoln Continental, waiting for a lift back to Binion's. Brunson himself was in the clubhouse settling up the morning's action. When he finally shambled out, he was smiling genially.

"How did it go?" asked the man from Albuquerque.

Brunson shrugged and said, "Win a few, lose a few." He opened the Lincoln's trunk, fumbled in a cardboard box, and passed around expensive pens with watches built into them, and German hunting knives in leather sheaths. "Can you guys use these things?" he mumbled. When we started to thank him, he looked embarrassed and said, "I got this friend who owes me poker money, and he was kinda stuck. He gives these things to his salesmen, so I took some off him in part payment to help him out. It don't mean a thing."

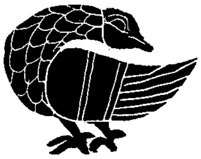
He climbed into the car and yawned prodigiously. "I didn't get but two hours' sleep last night," he said. "That never used to bother me none, but I guess I'm getting older. I reckon I'm going to have me a little siesta." He yawned again. "A little lunch, a little siesta."

We drove back in silence. But at four o'clock, when I went into the card room at the Horseshoe, Brunson was playing again. He was still there at midnight.

THE evening after the Irish Republican Army hunger striker Bobby Sands starved himself to death in a Belfast prison, I shared a table in the Sombrero Room with a burly Texan. He was twenty-eight thousand dollars behind, he told me, and had been playing non-stop for twenty-four hours. His sullen face was unshaven, and he was devouring a great mound of spareribs. He ate ravenously, two-handed, and there was grease around his mouth, on the stubble of his chin, on his grimy T-shirt. He pointed a sparerib at the Las Vegas *Sun* lying beside his plate. "I cain't reckon it," he said. "A guy starving hisself to daith. It ain't natteral."

I said that it was inevitable—that the I.R.A. wanted a martyr and Mrs. Thatcher was pigheaded.

"Waill," he said, eying me carefully, as though I had just made a large bet and he wanted to see if I was bluffing, "I reckon you coulda made yourself a millen dollars right here in this room taking bets on that. No one woulda credited it."



"There was no other way," I said.

"A cool millen," he answered longingly. "Easy as pie." Then he turned his attention back to the spareribs.

It was the only moment in the four weeks I spent in Glitter Gulch when anyone referred to the outside world. A few days later, the news came that the Pope had been shot, but nobody mentioned it, despite the innumerable crucifixes dangling from the necks of both the players and the casino staff.

A man I know was playing in the three-dollar-and-six-dollar hold-'em game at the Golden Nugget on the night of Jimmy Carter's election to the Presidency. In the small hours of the morning, he left the game briefly and went up to his room to get the results from TV. When he returned, he announced to the table at large, "We've got a new President—Jimmy Carter." The dealer stared at him coldly, as if he had broken some obscure house rule, and the man sitting next to him said, "The bet is three dollars." There was no other comment. Later that morning, the banner headline of the early edition of the Las Vegas *Review Journal* read "DEALERS LOSE TO I.R.S." In the bottom right-hand corner was a small paragraph headed "JIMMY CARTER NEW PRES."

After you have spent a period in Glitter Gulch, even the mountains off on the horizon no longer seem real, or the jet trails high above them. Everything is swallowed up by the fiction of action and a vast, insatiable narcissism. One afternoon, a tourist announced to the sunbathers around the pool at the Mint Hotel that a heavy loser had sat down in the lobby of Caesars Palace, put a gun in his mouth, and blown his head off.

"When?" asked the pool attendant.

"Yesterday," said the tourist.

A mousy-haired young woman who was resting between blackjack sessions looked up from her Harold Robbins novel and said, "*I* was at Caesars yesterday."

The professional gamblers inoculate themselves against this contagious unreality by betting on everything. Betting is the one sure way of engaging their attention. The more successful they are, the higher the bets must be. "I used to be able to play hard in all games—cheap and high," Brunson said. "But now I can only play high. I tell myself that's because there's no sense in wearing myself out for the big action, but the truth is, I don't play well in small games, because the incentive is no longer there."

I asked what he meant by small.

"Well, two-hundred-and-four-hundred-dollar limit is small to me now, although at that level you can win ten or twenty thousand over a period of time," he said. (In two-hundred-and-four-hundred-limit hold 'em, for the opening two rounds of betting the bets and raises are limited to two hundred dollars; for the fourth and fifth cards, the bets are limited to four hundred dollars.) "But we play so high out here—five hundred and a thousand, one thousand and two thousand, and no limit. In the games with the casino owners and the bookmakers and the dope dealers, there can be millions of dollars on the table. I guess I've got spoiled. As a player, I've got more experience now, but I don't have the desire and the concentration and the discipline unless the game is real high. When the stakes are big enough to catch my attention, then I revert to my old self. In fact, they make a joke about it. They say, 'Better not raise it up too high or Doyle will play better.' It's the same in everything—I wouldn't play golf unless I played for a lot of money, and I've *never* watched a football game or a basketball game without a bet on it. I'd go crazy with boredom." He added, "Not that I consider myself a compulsive gambler. I can go for long periods without making a bet, but if I do, I don't play golf, I don't watch ballgames, I don't play cards. Man is a creature of his environment, and I guess I've just got used to it. When in Rome, you gotta shoot Roman candles."

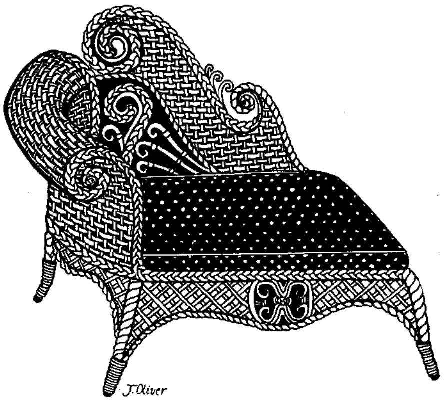
BRUNSON's inability to be interested in anything unless there is big money involved influenced him even when, in 1977—after he won the World Series of Poker for the second year in succession—he took twelve months off from the tables to write a book about poker. He gathered a number of experts on games at which he felt himself not to be the final authority—Crazy Mike Caro on draw, Joey Hawthorne on lowball, Chip Reese on seven-card stud, David Sklansky on high-low split, Bobby Baldwin on limit hold 'em—and they talked into a tape recorder until he had accumulated mountains of transcripts. Then Brunson, helped by a sportswriter named Allan Goldberg, organized these into a six-hundred-page book.

Like every serious poker player, Brunson had brooded at length on his wins and losses (especially his losses), analyzing hands and plays and players, refining his strategies over the years, learning from his own mistakes, and capitalizing on the mistakes of others. "But I'd never thought in a systematic way about what I was doing," he told me. "I knew I had a lot of ideas, but I had never clarified them precisely to myself. That year I spent writing the book was the hardest work I ever have done."

Brunson chose a peculiarly Vegas title for the first edition: "How I Made Over $1,000,000 Playing Poker." Later, he changed that to the less flamboyant "Super/System: A Course in Power Poker." Like the titles, the prose will not win any prizes—except for its unwavering determination to split every infinitive. But as a postgraduate guide to the intricacies of high-level, high-stakes poker the work has no equal. The classic poker books, like Herbert O. Yardley's "The Education of a Poker Player," concentrate on simple guidelines designed to disabuse beginners of the idea that poker is a gambling game and to instill in them the principles of conservative play. Brunson takes that kind of basic knowledge for granted, and also takes for granted the idea that everyone knows how to play tight. The strategies that interest him are those by which the experts outmaneuver each other when they are playing the finest of fine edges.

There are two types of poker books: the how-tos, which are more or less abstract and often contain a good deal of mathematics about probabilities and percentages, and the autobiographical, like Yardley's classic, in which examples and solid advice are sandwiched between racy stories about dramatic games. Recently, Johnny Moss, Amarillo Slim Preston, and Bobby Baldwin have cashed in on the fame brought them by their World Championships (Moss won the title in 1970, 1971, and 1974, Amarillo Slim in 1972, Baldwin in 1978) by writing—or having ghostwritten for them—maundering accounts of their lives and hard times, sometimes with, sometimes without, practical advice from the horse's mouth. Brunson is both more modest and more ambitious. He is interested not in his image but in the endless intricacies of the game itself at the highest level. Yet, because he set out to think about how he and his colleagues play, the result is curiously personal, in places, for such a technical book. He writes:

> The very best players I know are extremely aggressive. . . . And I firmly believe that's what accounts for the difference between a very good player and a truly top player. It's the dividing line. That's for sure.
>
> There's not a man alive that can keep beating on me. I refuse to let somebody keep taking my money . . . and all the other truly top players are the same way. An aggressive player might do it for a while . . . keep leaning on me. But, at the first opportunity I get, I'm going to take a stand and put all my money in the pot.
>
> It's like that little boy who keeps sticking his head up and keeps getting slapped all the time. Well, sooner or later he's *not* going to stick his head up any more. So if a guy keeps going on and on and keeps pounding on me . . . then me and him are fixing to play a pot.



The grammar may be shaky in places, the punctuation baroque, but the voice is distinct and the message is clear: aggression, constant aggression. It is a strange contradiction of Brunson's imperturbable geniality away from the table, of his good humor, his generosity, and his sweet tooth. Johnny Moss, the seventy-five-year-old Texan, who has been gambling professionally since he was a teenager, looks exactly like what he is: in Brunson's words, "a tough, tough cookie." Brunson, however, looks like a jovial creation of Chaucer's, overweight and liberal-handed, just as Jack Straus, another killer at the table, has all the charm and insouciance of Paul Newman in "The Sting." I asked them if this double attitude didn't make life unduly complicated.

Brunson laughed, although without much enthusiasm. "You mean schizo — whatever it is?"

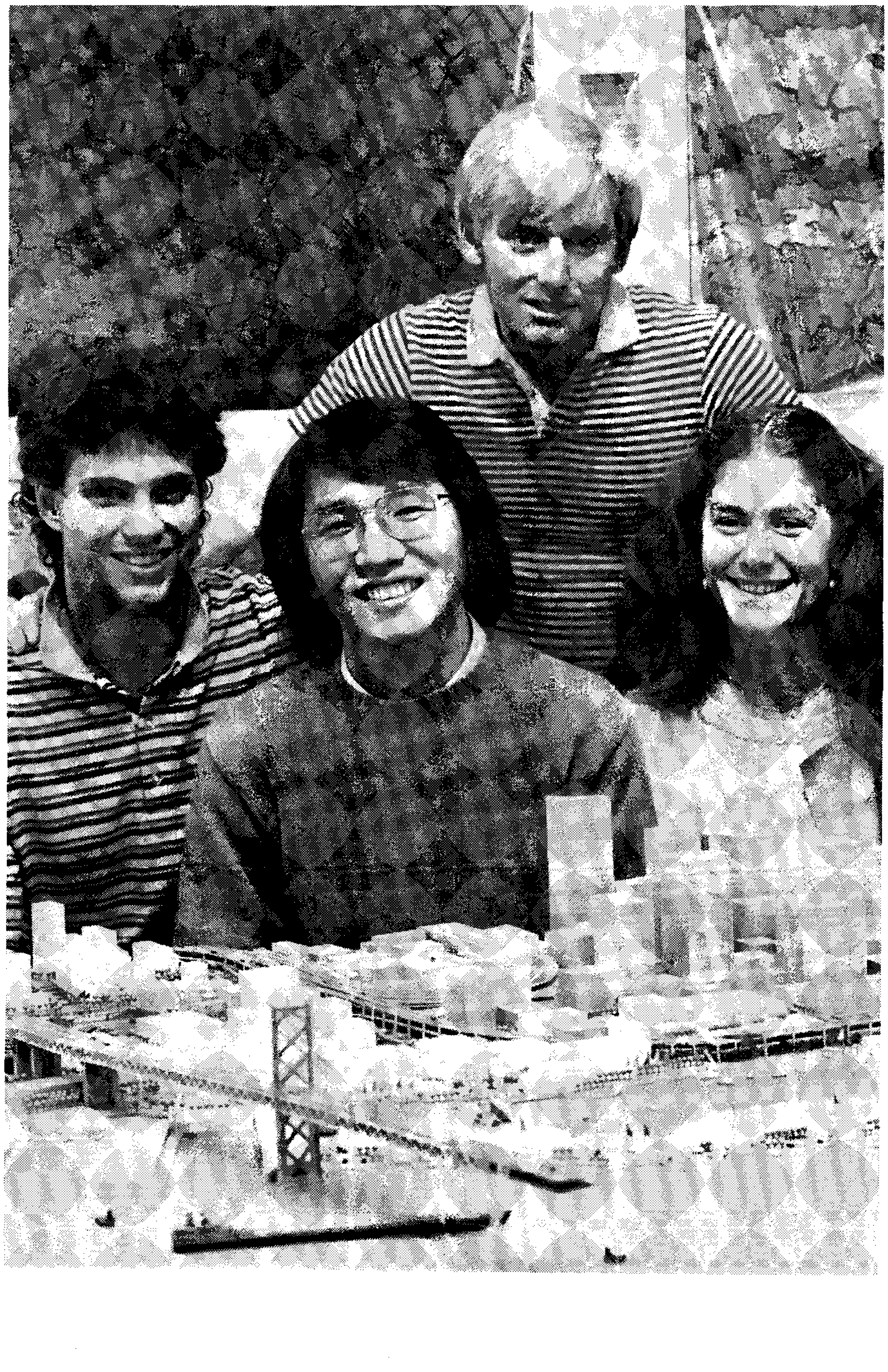
"No. Just complicated."

He nodded indulgently, as though humoring a small child. "When I sit down at the poker table, I'm there to win," he said. "Nothing complicated about that."

"Winning is everything," said Straus, who was a basketball star at Texas A. & M. "Doyle, when you played basketball back in college, did it bother you to lose? I had what they call a nervous stomach. I couldn't eat after we lost, and if any of my teammates were laughing and having a good time it really upset me. I couldn't sleep, either; I'd just lie there and think about the things I might have done. Poker's the same—it's all about competition. Different people are afraid of different things. Me, I'm afraid of embarrassment. If I lose, I don't give a damn about the money, but I just hate the embarrassment of being beaten."

Perhaps Brunson, Straus, and the

Jong Seh Lee came here to learn city planning. We think he's learning a whole lot more.



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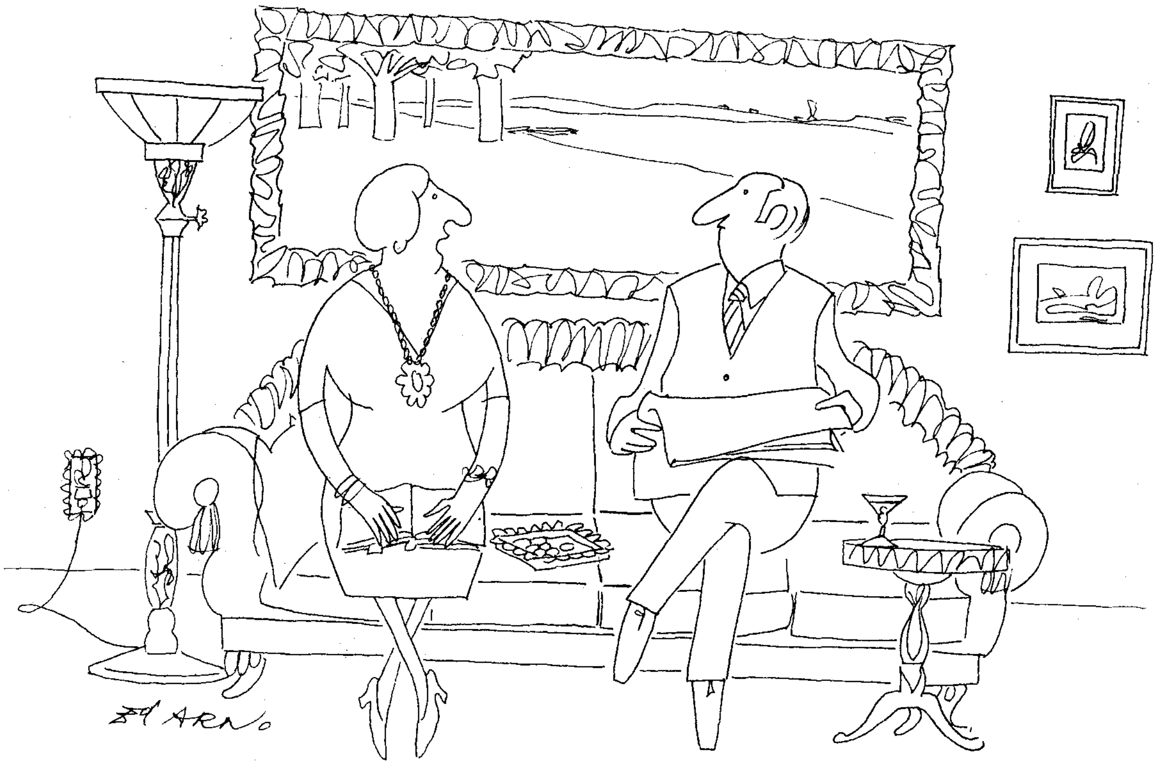

“Must you use words like ‘redoubtable’ when we’re alone, dear?”

• •

other high rollers can afford to be such easygoing company away from the table because while they are at the table all their aggressions are expressed, accounted for, controlled. As a young New York gambler, Mickey Appleman, who has yet to graduate to the really big side games, says, admiringly and a little longingly, “Pettiness has no part in their lives.”

The need to win and the need to be financially involved in anything that merits his attention stayed with Brunson when he came to publish his book. A number of publishing houses had approached him, but from his millionaire’s perspective none of their offers made sense. “They offer you a peanut—five or ten per cent—and then want to take all the rest,” he told me. “I asked them to let me put up my share of whatever it cost to produce the book and make me a partner. They answered, ‘We have the organization, the know-how, the sales force, the printers. You provide the text and you *are* a partner—for ten per cent.’ And they wouldn’t shift, however much I argued. So finally I decided to go ahead and do it myself. Naturally, they told me it wasn’t possible, but I answered, ‘I’ve done everything I set out to do in my life. I reckon I’ll do this, too.’ So I got hold of Allan Goldberg, and we set up a joint company, B. & G. Publishing—Brunson and Goldberg.”

Never one to do things by halves, Brunson rented a lush suite of offices (“I looked like Doubleday”), hired a staff, installed a hundred-thousand-dollar computer, and, when the book was eventually published, with a price of a hundred dollars, advertised it in every paper in the country that had a circulation of more than a hundred thousand. But in the world beyond Las Vegas an excessively expensive book with a long-winded, unappealing title is hard to sell. And Goldberg, it turned out, knew less about marketing than Brunson had hoped. “I spent three hundred and fifty thousand dollars and had nothing to show for it except a book I was selling for a hundred dollars a copy,” Brunson said. “People were buying it, but never on a profitable basis, and the overheads were eating me up. I planned to go ahead and publish other gaming books. I was really going to get into the book business. But I had it all wrong and the New York publishers got it right: I was into something I didn’t know a damned thing about. Then Goldberg and I had a disagreement, so I bought him out and went ahead with a girl in charge. But she ripped me off, so now I do it all by myself. It’s on a pretty small scale, but at least it’s making money.”

B. & G. Publishing currently operates from a tiny office somewhere off the Strip. Brunson collects his mail from the post office and sorts it himself, carefully checking the order forms and the dates. His sole employee is a squat, smiling girl with sandy hair and a mouthful of metal. She hovers over him while he opens the morning’s letters.

Brunson eventually sold out his first edition, of five thousand, then cut the price to a mere fifty dollars and published a second edition, with the new, snappier title; that, too, is selling slowly but steadily. After all, the price is no more than an ante or an opening bet in what would be a rather small game for Brunson and his cronies. But he has had his action in publishing, and no longer has any illusions about beating the big houses at their own game. “It was like a toy,” he said. “And I was just playing at being a businessman.”

In his idle moments now, Brunson plays with the idea of running for Congress as an independent on a single-plank platform—a reform of the gambling laws that Robert F. Kennedy introduced in his effort to cripple the mob when he was Attorney General. “They strike me as being unconstitutional, and a guy running in a gambling state like Nevada could maybe pick up a lot of votes,” Brunson said. When I observed that it was hard to stay independent in a closed world like Washington, he shook his head serenely and said, “Everyone who goes into the political arena has political aspirations—most of them want to be President—so they are afraid to step on anybody’s toes. It would be interesting to see what a guy could do if he didn’t give a damn about his political career.” He settled comfortably in his chair. “It’s just a thought,” he added.

Meanwhile, the book has worked against Brunson in his chosen career by making the competition more intense. “In the old days, if a guy came along and tried playing my aggressive game I would just move up a gear and

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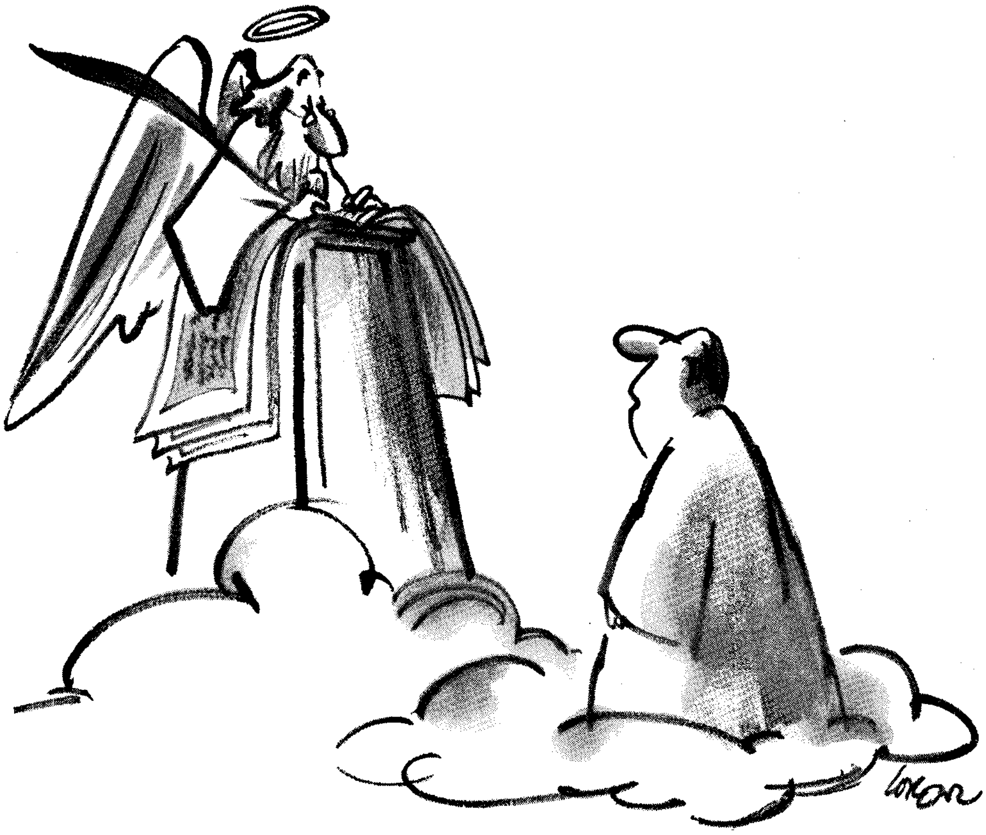

“I accept the four thousand years in Limbo with the understanding that it in no way constitutes an admission of wrongdoing.”

play right back over him,” Brunson told me. “But now they’ve read the book, they recognize what I’m doing; they think I’m bluffing, and call me. It’s hampered my style. I used to be able to wreck a game without holding any cards at all, because I never got called. Now I need the cards.”

The traditional strategy in no-limit hold ’em was to wait until you were dealt strong cards, like a big pair or an ace-king, and then lure as many people as you could into the pot with you by betting moderately in the opening round when each player receives two cards face down, which only he sees, then moving in with a large bet after the flop—the first three of the five communal cards that are dealt face-up in the center. Brunson was the first to point out that these big hands could easily be broken when middling cards flopped, and that the hands of real value were small pairs or two small connected cards of one suit—a six and a seven of hearts, say—which an indifferent flop might turn into straights or flushes or threes of a kind. “They never used to play cards like that,” he said. “When they raised, they always had big cards. So if you came in with small cards for a relatively small amount of money and beat those big hands, you would just break them. It was only a question of time until you did it. It was so easy it was like stealing. But now they’ve all read my book, and they’re smarter.” He held up his hands, one a couple of inches above the other. “The difference between the top players and the good players used to be like this. The top players would let the inferior players round up the money; then they would beat them. The home-town champions would break their local games, then come out here and be broken by us. Now it’s like this.” He moved his hands together—one lying on the other. “It’s getting harder all the time. Maybe that’s not such a bad thing. At least it’s creating new players. Even so . . .” His head tilted quizzically, and he spread his hands as though in blessing. “If I had it to do again, I wouldn’t write that book.”

THE month when the poker room at the Horseshoe is open is, for the professionals, what the weeks before Christmas are for Saks Fifth Avenue: the beginning or the end of their financial year, when they either make enough money to see them through to the next tournament or lose so much that they must hustle non-stop to survive the next eleven months. Yet financially the World Series itself matters to them a good deal less than the unofficial games. The tournament is a sideshow that brings in players from all over the world, and the professionals enter the big events mainly because honor and their devotion to the Binion clan dictate that they do so. But the official events are freeze-outs; everything depends on the players’ getting the right cards at the right moment, since they cannot buy themselves back in after their chips are gone. In the side games, however, the money is virtually unlimited.

“I’d love to play in all the tournament events,” Brunson said to me one day during the 1981 World Series. “But there are so many good players entering that the overlay is too big; you can’t figure to win them. So they are just going to consume your time and wear you out for the high-stakes side games. For instance, the first prize in the last event—the preliminary seven-card stud—is fifty-two thousand dollars. Now, I’m not averse to playing for three days and winning fifty grand, but that’s just the first prize, and in that time I can be playing in a game where I could probably win that much. Not for sure—nothing’s for sure in poker—but at least the money will be there, and I figure to win.”

He figures to win: the top players gather from every state in the Union, and the Vegas professionals wait to be challenged by them, like knights in armor—or, rather, since this is the West, like the last of the gunslingers, loners in a dangerous profession. For them, the risk, challenge, and solitariness of their profession are a source of intense pride. Ask them about the lure of the way they live, and they talk about being free, outside the system, unanswerable to any boss; they tell you that they alone decide when they work and for how long; they boast that they cannot be put into any computer, though they then complain that the Internal Revenue Service treats them differently from other businessmen, taxing them on their winnings and making no allowance for their losses. They talk also, more vaguely, about the elation and release of “action,” and take pride in their willingness to risk, if not their lives, at least their livelihoods when they think the odds are in their favor. Curtis Skinner, a Vegas regular known as Iron Man—because on the golf course he prefers not to use a wood—told me that in the nineteen-fifties Brunson played in a golf match when he had only fifteen hundred dollars to his name; he bet the whole sum on the front nine holes, lost, and was unable to play the back nine. "He'll gamble as high as his billfold will allow," Iron Man said. "And he'll bet it all on the first bet."

I had watched Iron Man playing poker, although never with Brunson, so I asked, "What about you?"

Iron Man is short and round-bellied, with a hooked and wrinkled Hogarthian face. He wears a green baseball cap and a track suit unzipped to show a large gold nugget dangling against his hairy chest from a gold chain. He shook his head and said, "I prefer the medium-sized games. I'm not trying to win a battleship."

The master of this absolute, all-or-nothing way of life is Jack Straus. In 1970, a terrible run at poker in Las Vegas reduced him to his last forty dollars. Instead of quitting, he took the forty dollars to the blackjack table and bet it all on a single hand. He won, and continued to bet all the money in front of him until he had turned the forty dollars into five hundred. He took the five hundred back to the poker game and ran it up to four thousand, returned to the blackjack table and transformed the four thousand into ten thousand. He finally bet the whole sum on the Kansas City Chiefs in the Super Bowl and won twenty thousand dollars. In less than twenty-four hours, he went from near bankruptcy to relative affluence. The story is famous enough to have gone into gambling folklore, but the real point of it is his refusal to compromise. Each time he bet, he bet all the money he had, from the first forty dollars to the final ten thousand.

It was a question of both pride and principle. In poker, one of the defining skills of a good player is money management—the ability to judge a bet and a situation subtly enough to make the maximum profit without being eliminated from the game. But Straus had had his back to the wall—forty dollars is not enough to sit down with even at a baby-stakes game—and when he sensed that his luck had turned he kept pressing. "The next-best thing to gambling and winning is gambling and losing," said Nick the Greek Dandolos, who died broke on Christmas Day of 1966. He also said, "The exhilaration of this form of economic existence is beyond my power to describe." Straus himself, who, unlike the other professionals, reads books and travels outside America, prefers the proverb that Ernest Hemingway adopted as his own: "Better one day as a lion than a hundred years as a lamb." In 1972, Straus went big-game hunting in Africa, and he had the paw of the first lion he shot mounted, with those words inscribed in gold around it. It was an act of self-definition as well as a tribute to the beast. "Some people play three hundred and sixty-five days a year in small games and try to grind out an existence," he said. "I just play in the very, very high games. There aren't that many of them, but I try to win enough to more than exist for the rest of the year."

In true gunslinger fashion, Straus prefers short-handed games to ring games, which involve eight or nine people, and is at his best with a single opponent—when aggression, initiative, and psychology are far more important than the cards. That is why he does not always do as well as he might in the World Series, where in the early stages patience is the most important virtue. But in 1981 he reached the final of the ace-to-the-five (no-limit) lowball event, a particularly brutal variation of draw poker, in which certain conventionally strong hands—like three of a kind and full houses—are worthless; aces count low, and the perfect, unbeatable hand is a small straight: ace, 2, 3, 4, 5, called the wheel. In the closing stages of the tournament, Straus was head to head with Mickey Perry, another Texan. The cards had been running in Perry's favor, and Straus seemed to be playing defensively, surrendering the antes with uncharacteristic docility whenever Perry bet. The television cameras moved in and out, the lights blazed, the crowd at the rail jostled and craned to see the action. Finally, a big hand began to build. Perry bet a thousand dollars after the deal, and Straus raised him three thousand dollars. There was a long pause. "When he thinks about it like that," Straus told me afterward, "I reckon he's drawing to a nine, maybe a good nine—two, three, four, nine, with some rubbish card." After great hesitation, Perry saw the three-thousand-dollar raise and drew one card, as though to demonstrate that Straus had read him accurately. Straus stood pat. The dealer dealt a card to Perry, who shuffled it into his hand and then, holding his cards almost flat against his chest, as though he were chronically near-sighted, squeezed them cautiously out into a fan. Again he checked. Without hesitation, Straus bet twenty-seven thousand dollars—about three times the amount in the pot. There was another agonized pause, this one far longer than before. "Now I know what he's got," Straus told me. "He's made his nine, but it's rough. He's got a nine-eight." The crowd at the rail fell silent; even the television cameramen covering the event were still. Slowly, reluctantly, Perry separated twenty-seven thousand dollars from the other chips in front of him: two and a half stacks of twenty five-hundred-dollar chips and four further five-hundreds—a squat gray mass like a crusader's castle. He waited, calculating how many chips that left him with, and waited again while he peered over at Straus's stacks to see how much he had remaining. Then, even more slowly and reluctantly, he pushed the twenty-seven thousand dollars into the center and turned his cards over. They were exactly as Straus had reckoned: 2,3,4,8,9. Straus tossed his cards face down into the discards, conceding the hand.

The television director moved forward immediately. "Mr. Straus," he asked, "for the sake of the viewing audience, may we see your cards?"

Straus, who is six feet seven inches tall, had been, as usual, hunched in his seat, as if to conceal his enormous height. He uncoiled himself a little, reached for the cards, and turned them over slowly, one by one, his face as solemn as a hired mourner's at a wake: queen, queen, queen, jack, jack.

As one man, the railbirds burst into applause.

"Let's face it, gambling is a very romantic activity," Jack Binion told me. "Movies reflect what people are looking for. Well, I wonder how many gamblers a big star like Clark Gable played in his career. We all daydream about people doing something we are a little bit afraid to do, and we make heroes out of those who pull it off. Jack Straus epitomizes that. He may not look suave, but he's independent, charming, cool in every situation, and he does things everyone kind of dreams about. There are a lot of guys out there who would love to be Jack Straus."

Straus himself takes pleasure in the freedom and the precariousness of the way he lives. Another Texas profes-

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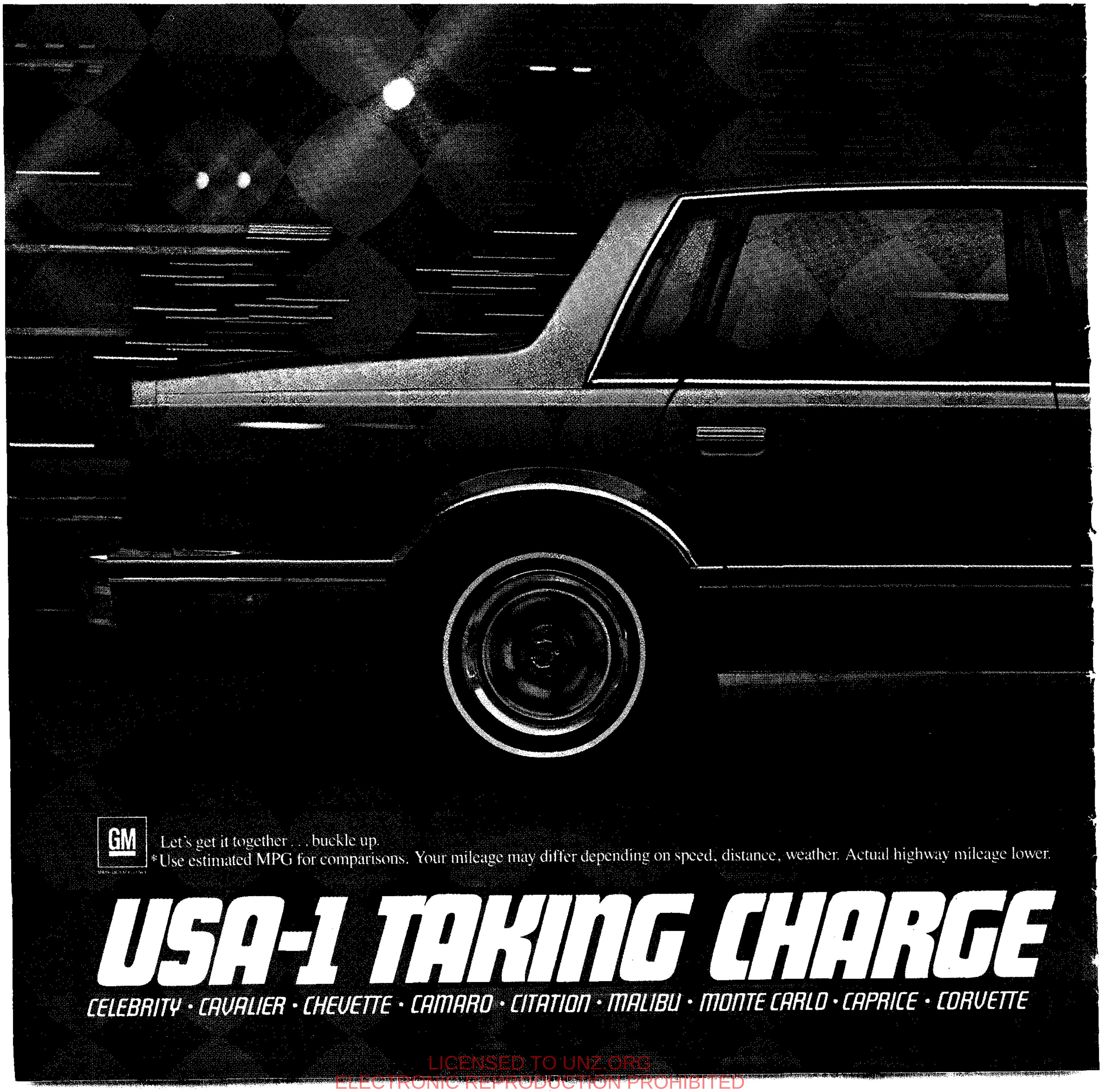
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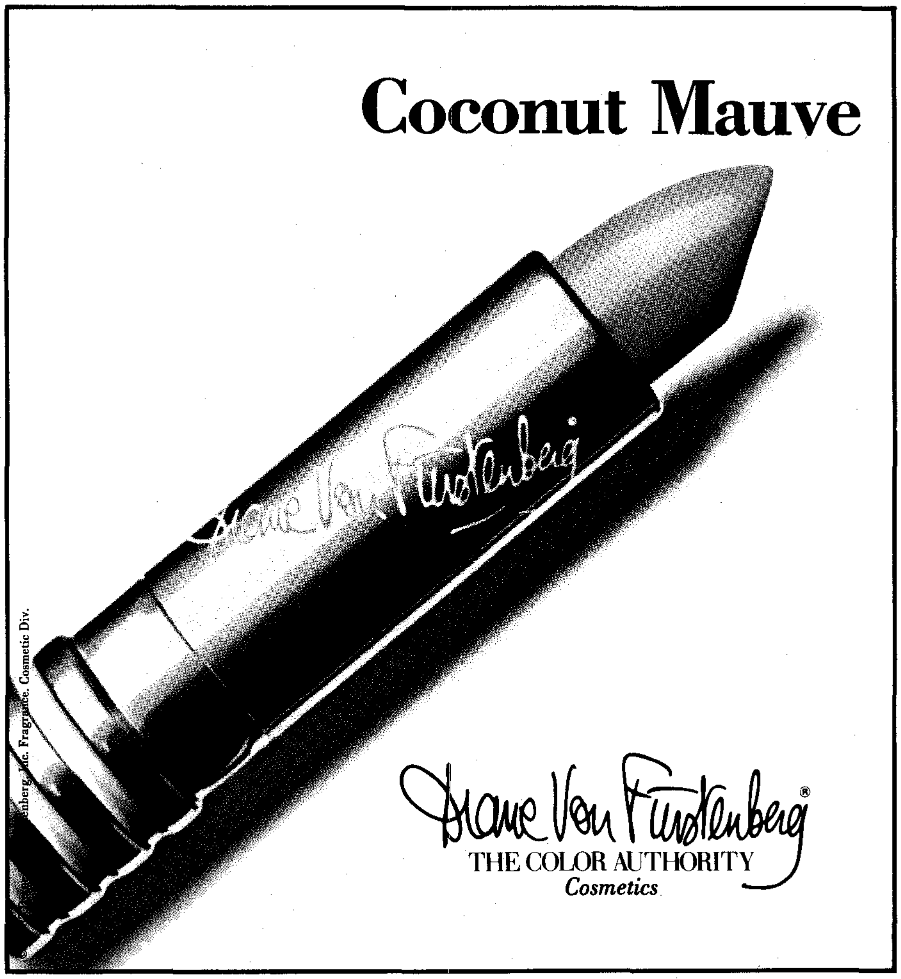
sional, Carl Cannon, went to law school before he decided to play poker for a living. "I chose the more honorable profession," he says. Straus, who has a degree in physical education from Texas A. & M., feels the same. "I have no regrets about my life," he says. "If I had it all to do again, I'd do it the same way."

As things are, Straus makes his experiences as a high roller the basis of endless outrageous stories, a new one for every occasion, each beginning, "Did I ever tell you about the time . . ."

The time when he was playing poker in the office of a used-car dealer. A customer came in just as the car dealer lost his sixth consecutive pot. "I'm interested in that red Chevrolet," said the customer. "Get the hell out of here," the dealer replied. "I don't have one car that will make it off the lot."

The time when the landlord walked in on a big game in a rented apartment. "I can't allow illegal gambling on my premises," he said. A wealthy businessman who was over fifty thousand dollars to the bad glared at him through the smoke and barked, "What's this place worth?" The landlord said, "I'd take thirty-eight thousand dollars for it." Without hesitating, the businessman wrote out a check and tossed it across the table. "Here's your thirty-eight thousand," he said. "Now get off my property."

The time when a stranger arrived in Houston wanting to play gin rummy for high stakes: "I told everybody to cut out the cussing and vulgarity, because this was a respectable businessman. (I always was a good judge of character.) So we played for a couple of days, and the game got higher and higher. Every time the stranger ran out of cash, he disappeared for a few minutes, then came back with another roll. About the tenth time he went out, I told the boys, 'Take it easy on him. This is one nice guy, and we don't want to spoil it, in case he feels like paying us another visit.' 'Jack,' said one of the players, 'it won't make no difference what he loses. I happened to see him out the window just now: he's got a suitcase full of money in the back of his car.' That was when I got to thinking that maybe he wasn't a legitimate businessman after all. A few days later, the F.B.I. came around inquiring about him. It turned out he was a bank robber, Public Enemy No. 1, wanted in every state from Tennessee to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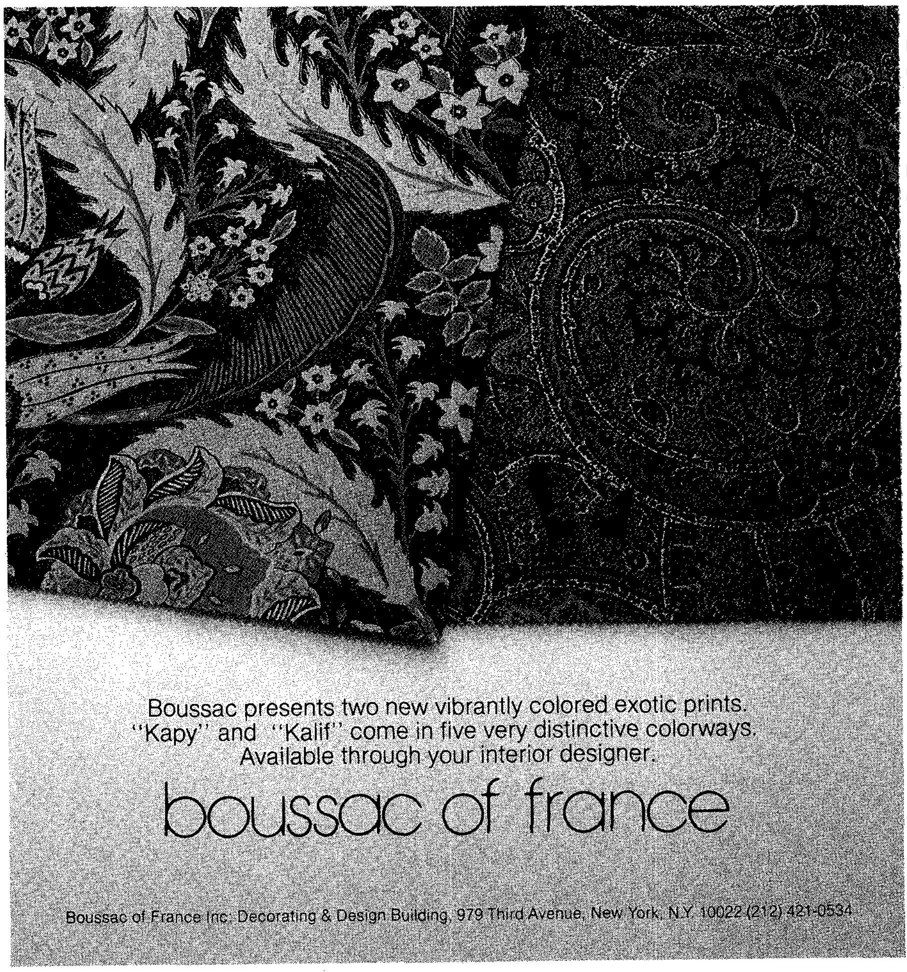
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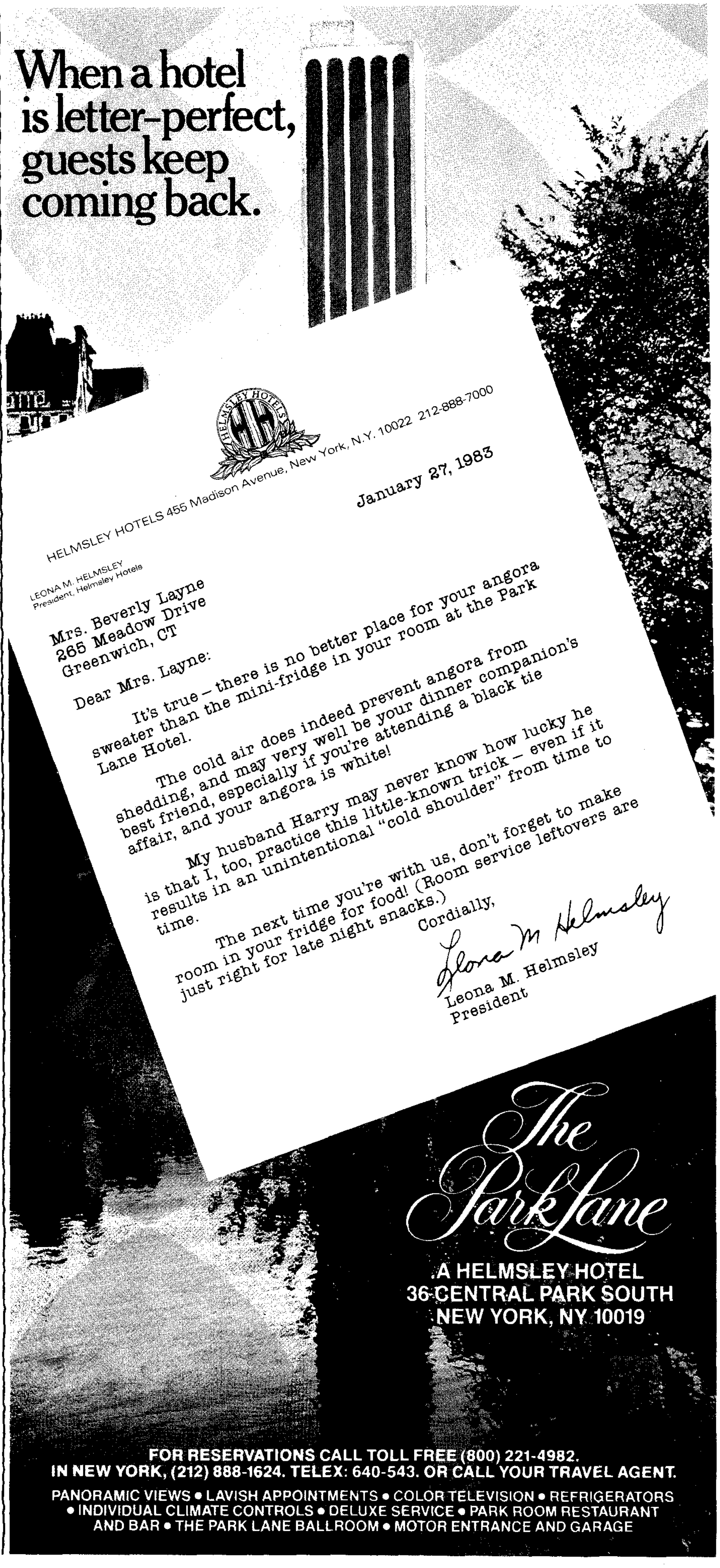
Texas. We ended up beating him out of all his money, but he was quite a gentleman about it. As he was leaving, I heard him say, 'Easy come, easy go.' "

The time, years ago, when his bankroll was far smaller than it is now and he owed money he didn't have to a high roller: "The guy said he was coming to collect on Monday, and I knew I couldn't raise the cash until Wednesday. But I daren't tell him that, or he would never trust me again. So while I was brooding about this problem, a buddy of mine walked in. When I told him what was wrong, he said, 'You think you're going bad? Look at this blue suit they've got me in. I started selling life insurance today.' Sure enough, he had on a blue suit, a white shirt, and a dark tie with stripes, his hair was cut short, and he was driving a black Ford instead of his fire-red convertible. That gave me an idea. I got hold of another kid with short hair—they were the only two clean-cut people I knew—and I gave them a couple of attaché cases and two billfolds with nothing inside. Then I got me a paper bag and stuffed it full of cut newspaper. I was supposed to meet the guy I owed money in front of the Hilton at noon. So my friends and I synchronized our watches and I told them to be waiting there in the Ford at eleven-fifty. Douglas, the guy I owed, was there at two minutes to twelve. Of course, he sees these guys in their suits and dark car, and he gets nervous. By the time I arrive, five minutes later, he's on tiptoe. As I round the corner, the two guys run up and grab me; they flash their wallets at me and shove me into their car. Douglas takes off running. By Wednesday, I had the money, so I called him on the phone. 'Don't say a word,' he said. 'I saw it all.' Then he hung up. It took me a week to get him paid."

One thread runs through all these stories: the sense of pleasure Straus derives from his chosen career. Unlike Johnny Moss or Doyle Brunson, Straus comes from a middle-class background, so money has never been a real problem for him. He began playing cards in high school—"I seemed to have the knack right from the start"—and at sixteen he won a car in a poker game. Since he did not yet know how to drive, he got the loser to park the car around the block from Straus's home and then had trouble explaining the acquisition to his parents. The family was close and religious; his parents disapproved of gambling and be-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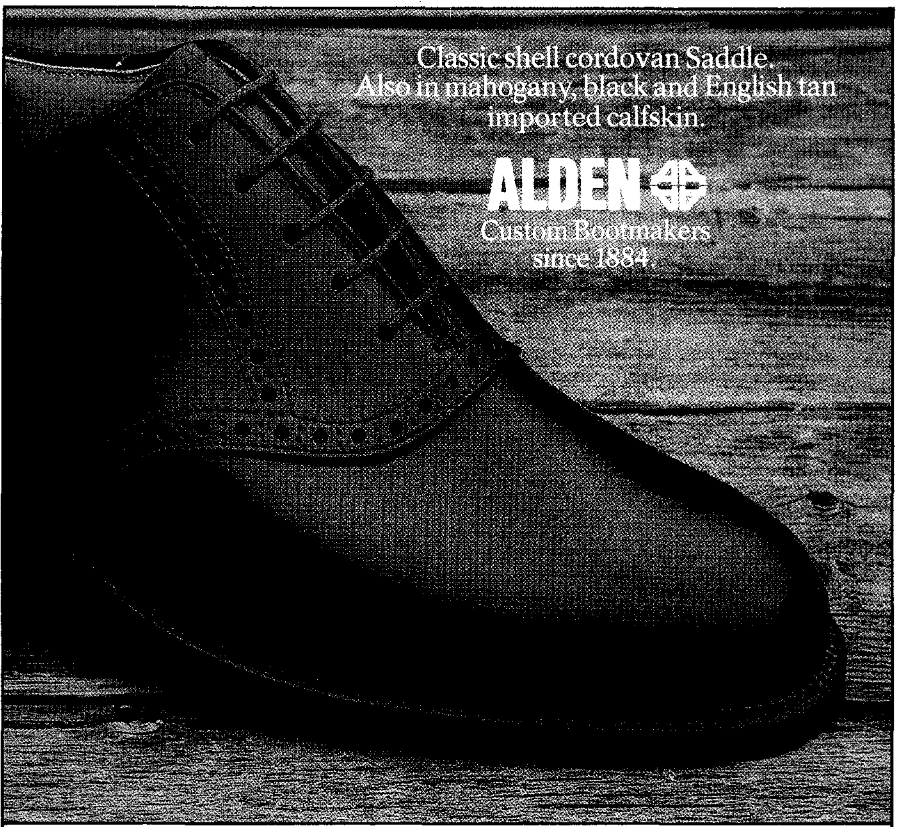

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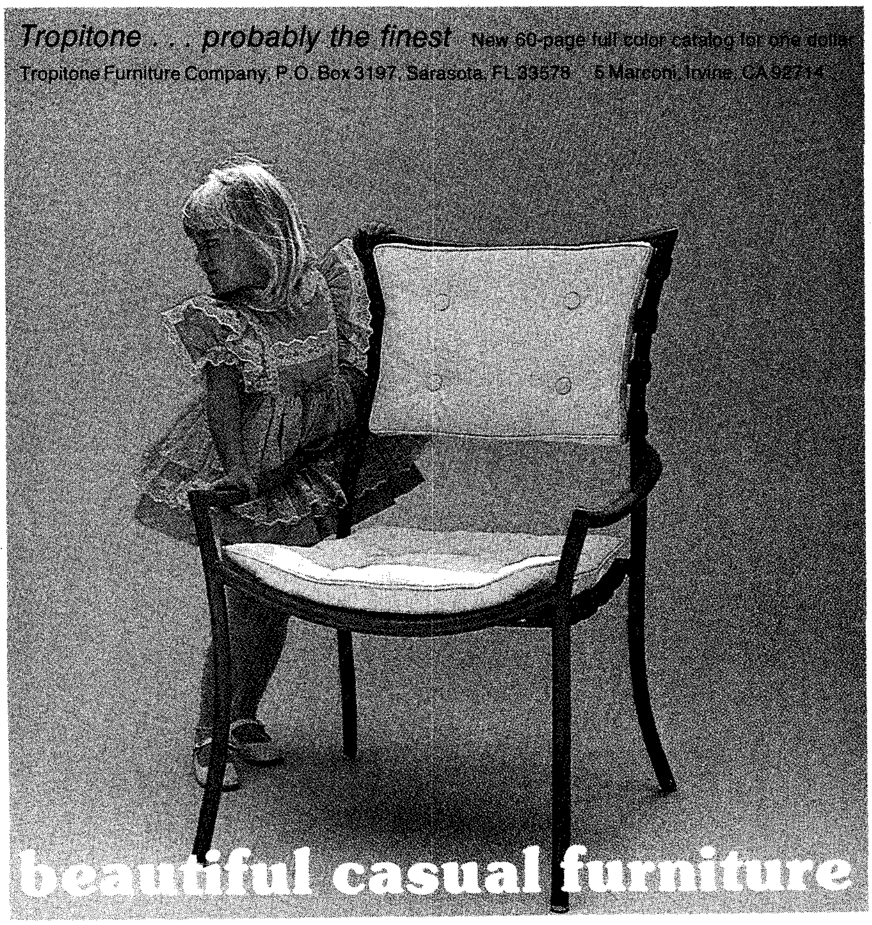

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lieved in duty. Straus's father managed a packing plant and lived his life strictly according to the conventions of the nineteen-thirties. "In those days, you were told you should work until you were sixty-five, then retire on two hundred a month," Straus said. "Well, my father, God bless his soul, worked very hard and did everything a person was supposed to do. But he died when he was fifty-eight, and never got to go anywhere or do anything." Straus took that lesson to heart and ordered his life according to two principles: to stay outside the system and to use his talents to enjoy life while he could. Enjoyment matters more to him than profit. He once rented two rooms over a Chinese restaurant and opened a private card club. For anyone else, it would have been a license to print money, but not for Straus. "We were open two years, and all the profit from the place, plus fourteen thousand dollars more, went out in bad debts," he said. "Nobody ever went home broke. If you won, you got cash; if you lost, you got credit. But we played every day, and had a lot of fun. It was a financial disaster and a social success."

As the bank robber said, "Easy come, easy go," and Straus is a man to whom most things seem to have come easily: he is a superb athlete, a crack shot, a natural cardplayer. "Sports were my whole life until I was too old to play anymore; then gambling looked like the next-best thing," he said. "It was fun, it was action, it was a challenge." This accords with Jack Binion's theory that the top poker players are not only mental athletes but also former athletes, who turn to gambling when they no longer have the physical ability or the inclination for sport. "It's a question of excitement," Binion said. "Gambling is a manufactured thrill—you intensify the anticipation of an event by putting money on it. How long could a slot machine hold your interest if you didn't bet on it? Not very long. But once you insert your money the anticipation of the outcome becomes very important to you. You have manufactured a thrill between the time you make the bet and the time you get the result. When you were at school and were full of school spirit, there was high anticipation when you watched your school play a championship game. Then you get out of school, turn on the television, and watch Arkansas play Houston at basketball. Neither team means anything to you, and maybe you don't even care that much about basketball, so your anticipation is not that high. But if you bet a hundred dollars on the result it will be 'Welcome back to that old school spirit.' In other words, gambling is a way of hyping an event."

But with time and custom it also becomes a habit of mind, even when the excitement needs no hyping at all. Straus once opened the door of his apartment to a friend who had gone berserk after a four-day alcoholic binge. The man charged in waving a gun, yelling that he was going to kill them all—Straus, his son, and a gambling friend. The drunk fired off one shot, wounding the gambler in the thigh, and then ordered all three of them to go down on their knees with their hands behind their heads. The boy and the wounded man did as they were told, but Straus remained standing, trying unsuccessfully to reason with the lunatic, and waiting for a chance to jump him. When the police arrived outside with guns and a bullhorn, the man became even more demented. "Where do you want me to shoot you?" he screamed at Straus. "In the stomach or between the eyes?"

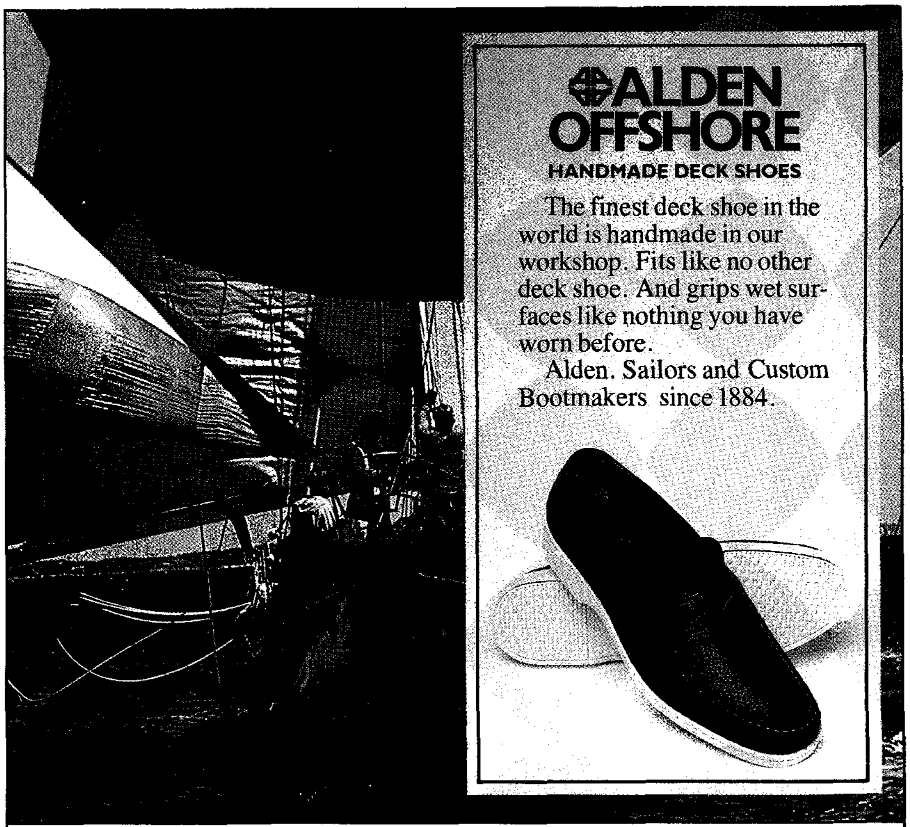
"I felt like saying, 'How about the big toe?' " said Straus. "But I was afraid he might not see the joke. It was the only time I was ever at a loss for words." Luckily for him, at that moment the police shouted from outside and the madman glanced at the window. Straus launched himself at him and knocked the gun from his hand. When it was all over, he asked the wounded gambler, "What did you make the price on me getting the gun before he killed me?"

"I made you about eight-to-five dog," the friend replied.

"Good Lord," said Straus. "I thought I was about even money. If I'd suspected I was an eight-to-five underdog, I wouldn't have had the nerve to jump."

It makes a good joke now, but at the time Straus was deadly serious. For the true gambler, there is a price for everything, even his own survival, and getting the right price adds an extra edge to the pure, addictive thrill of action. Nick the Greek ended his days playing five-and-ten-dollar-limit draw in the poker parlors of Gardena, California, but when someone suggested to him that this was perhaps a comedown from his days of glory he replied haughtily, "It's action, isn't it?"

The other side of action is the competitive spirit, the intense desire to win against all comers and against all



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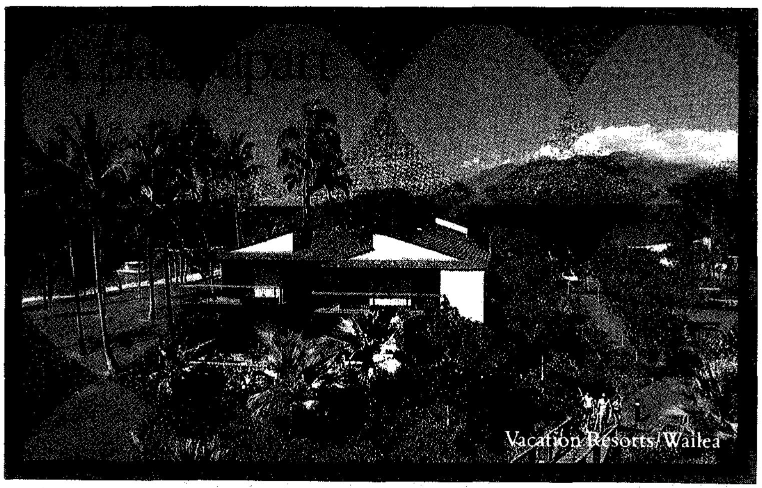

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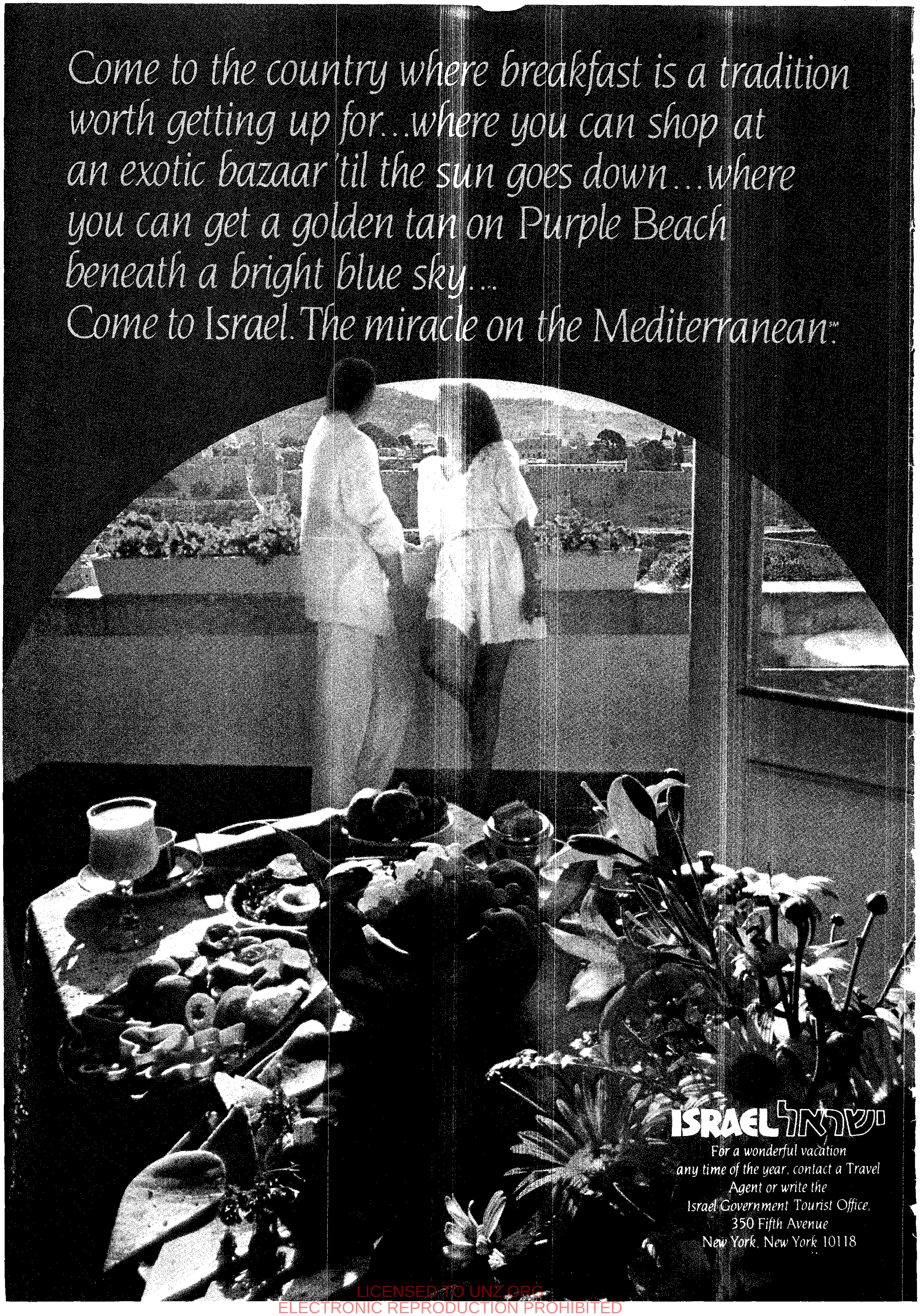

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odds. Straus said, "I wouldn't pay a ten-year-old kid a dime an hour to sit in a low-stakes game and wait for the nuts"—the unbeatable hand. "If there's no risk in losing, there's no high in winning. I have only a limited amount of time on this earth, and I want to live every second of it. That's why I'm willing to play anyone in the world for any amount. It doesn't matter who they are. Once they have a hundred or two hundred thousand dollars' worth of chips in front of them, they all look the same. They all look like dragons to me, and I want to slay them."

From Straus's point of view, it makes perfect sense. To others, the only puzzle is that rich amateurs are willing to sit down and play with people like Straus and his colleagues, knowing that their chances of winning are so slim. When I asked Bobby Baldwin about this, he replied, "Poker is the only game in Las Vegas where you are competing against other people instead of against the house. If you beat the twenty-one table or the craps table, you get just so much satisfaction. But if you beat Jack or Doyle or me—well, that's the greatest thing in the world. Anyway, a lot of players who come out here can afford to lose—in fact, they probably write it off as entertainment. Sometimes they win, but even if they lose they can say, 'What the hell, at least I took a shot at those guys and gave it my best.' And they enjoy the game, they enjoy the company. We never have any arguments. Fortunes may change hands, but everyone is a perfect gentleman."

It sounded too good to be true, so I asked one of the amateurs who come out regularly for the World Series. Seymour Leibowitz is a sweet-natured, overweight man who once worked in the garment trade and has been a destroyer of amateur games from Philadelphia to Miami. He does not, however, often win against the Vegas professionals. Why, then, beat his head against a stone wall? "This is the most fascinating group of men," he answered. "I've played cards all over the world, but nowhere is like this. These men are such good players and such good sports and so honorable that I just love it. As for the expense, if the money doesn't hurt a little there's no fun. I play within my means, but I play in the big games. I like them. That's my pleasure. I look on it as a month's vacation. If I took a trip around the world, it would cost me forty or fifty thousand dollars, because anything I do I like to do in style. Otherwise, what good is it? But at the end of a vacation you've got nothing. Whereas I come here and I go away with memories, pleasures, friends. It seems that the higher you play, the nicer the men."

At the annual prize-giving just before the end of the 1981 World Series of Poker, Seymour Leibowitz was given a special award for being "the most congenial player in the tournament."

FOR the talented, Jack Binion is fond of saying, Las Vegas is the land of milk and honey, and for the rest it is a burial ground. Perhaps that is one way of explaining the prodigious crime rate, which the local papers find harder to disguise than to report. All the losers in the world come to Vegas in the hope of changing their luck; but losers are losers wherever they go, and eventually they become desperate. Hence the muggings, the violence, the theft. Hence, too, the depression. When the regulars in the low-limit games are going well, they earn pocket money and try to persuade themselves that they are making a living. Most of them are good enough to know the probabilities of filling a hand and to calculate automatically the odds offered by every pot. And because the ante is small they can sit for hour after hour waiting for bombproof cards. This gives them a tremendous advantage over impatient visiting tourists. But it is not enough to beat the house rake—the few dollars taken by the casino from every pot, which chips away like a stonemason at winners and losers alike.

Every so often, one of the regulars has a miracle night when everything goes right for him. But then he has to fight the temptation to take his winnings to the bigger game at the next table. At the Golden Nugget, the difference between the three-and-six-dollar-limit hold-'em game and the ten-and-twenty-dollar is a quantum leap in skill as well as in money. Some regulars make the move, filled with unreasoning confidence; most are back the next night at the smaller game, broke again and scratching around to survive. In the meantime, the physical strain eats away at them as remorselessly as the house rake. Their backs ache from their slouching in chairs, their arms ache from their leaning them against the raised leather edge of the table, their skin is soggy and unaired from their playing all night and sleeping all day, their paunches sag, their eyes are muddy, their digestion is ruined by countless cups of coffee and starchy, irregular meals gobbled hastily in the forty-five minutes they are allowed to be away from the table and retain their seats.

As for conversation, the only talk is in the short breaks while the dealer fans a fresh deck of cards across the baize, checks them, and shuffles.

"How are things back in Utah?" asked a weathered, elderly man.

"Wet when I left," said his weathered, elderly neighbor.

"How's the back?"

"Better since I quit the truckin' business."

"Your bet," said the dealer to the first elderly man.

Mickey Appleman once remarked to me that a lot of people don't fit in where they are but Las Vegas takes anybody. More important, I realized, it never comments. One evening, a tall, dignified woman in her early seventies, who looked like the late Queen Mary, sat down at the low-stakes hold-'em game. Her face was refined, with small features made delicate by age; her dress was a sedate black-and-white; her silver hair was piled in a discreet beehive. She smiled politely whenever she raised, and when she won she said "Thank you" to the dealer as he pushed the chips toward her. Every inch a lady except for one detail: pinned to the front of her beehive with a wooden toothpick was a neatly folded paper towel to shield her eyes from the glare. Nobody seemed to notice.

Nor did anyone comment on the man, solemnly eating his way through the buffet in the Sombrero Room, who was so obese that his tiny, bald head seemed to belong to another body entirely; he looked as if he were trapped in an overinflated balloon. He peered about from the center of his great mass like a tortoise, horn-rimmed spectacles at the end of his little nose, his eyes protuberant and astonished.

There were times at the beginning of my stay when Las Vegas seemed more like a raree-show than like a vacation city. But after a while I, too, no longer noticed.

ONE afternoon, I shared a lunch table in the Sombrero Room with one of Binion's dealers. He was a skeleton-thin young man with large, hurt eyes behind large, thick glasses. His name, according to the plastic tag on his shirt, was Ronnie. There was a book beside him on the padded bench, and on the table were a loose-leaf file and a calculator. When I sat down, he was shuffling through the papers and punching figures into the calculator with a speed and dexterity that seemed inappropriate to the hurt look in his eyes. He nodded contentedly at my press badge, but when I asked him which game he had been dealing he answered vaguely and seemed disappointed. He closed his file and watched me patiently while I ate, and then, when I filled my pipe, he pulled out a cigarette and waited for me to light it for him. Finally, he said, "I guess you don't know who I am." I looked at his name tag again and said "Ronnie." His eyes deepened behind the thick lenses, and he smiled diffidently. "Used to be Suzie," he said. He riffled through the file and extracted an old clipping. The headline said, "SEX CHANGE DEALER RETURNS TO BINION'S HORSESHOE." He told me he had been in the Navy—in the Caribbean during the Cuban missile crisis—but when he got out nothing went right. Between 1970 and 1976, he made thirty-six attempts to kill himself with sleeping pills, but in the hospitals nobody seemed to understand—not even the psychiatrists. In 1970, he had had a sex-change operation in New Jersey. Later, as Suzie, he came out to Las Vegas, and became a dealer. "I did all right," he said. "But somehow it didn't solve the problem."

"Which problem?" I asked.

His huge eyes fixed me, unblinking. "Loneliness," he said.

In 1980, he found someone willing to listen to him. The man was an evangelist, and through him Suzie found God, was born again, and proved it by having another sex change, back to Ronnie. "It was nothing," he said. "I had a mastectomy and I cut my hair. It wasn't painful—not like the first operation." I asked if it had made him happier, and he nodded. "I used to be terrified of dying and of growing older. In that order. Now I know there isn't going to be any death. The day you die is the first day of your life." He waited for me to comment, and when I didn't he nodded at my press badge and said, "Reading helped me. I read Dale Carnegie's 'How to Win Friends & Influence People,' and it changed my life. A great book." When I asked him what else he had read, he patted the large book on the bench beside him and said, "The Bible. There's more truth and wisdom in this than in any other book in the world." Then, suddenly, briefly, he was off, talking about peace and calm and contentment in the vague, singsong voice of a child repeating a lesson learned by rote. His eyes unfocussed, and for a moment he seemed lonelier than anyone else I had ever met—as though loneliness were the element he moved in, like a fish in water.

A group of players wandered in and settled at the next table. Ronnie blinked, shook his head, eyed them uneasily. He finished his recitation, but without conviction, and began to fiddle with his calculator. When the conversation finally turned to poker, as all conversations in the Sombrero Room eventually did during the tournament, he rattled off odds and probabilities like any other Vegas regular. It was only when I got up to leave that he remembered that his bizarre sexual sideshow had made him a Vegas celebrity. "There's a big article about me coming up in the *National Enquirer*," he said. "Be sure to read it."

"Of course," I said. But later, whenever I saw him, he pretended not to recognize me, as though he felt he had betrayed himself.

THE freak show was easier to take from a distance, and the view from my twelfth-floor window at the Golden Nugget—across the back lots, the railroad tracks, and the desert to the ring of blue mountains—was always soothing. One morning, I was awakened by the sound of a band, faint but distinct through the double glazing. Down below, diminished and foreshortened by the drop, a convention of Shriners was parading along the cross street: garishly uniformed brass bands, men in fezzes and flowing Turkish robes, clowns, floats, more bands, a pack of jokers in mobile beds, grown men driving miniature cars. Two vans were parked around the corner, directly below me, dispensing cans of cold beer. The parade broke up abruptly when it reached them, then re-formed haphazardly, drinking as it went. Balloons whirled about in the hot wind, rose, drifted off toward the railroad tracks. A squad of comic motorbikes wobbled past, a fire engine with a waving, motley crew, then more grown men in toy cars. At the rear of the parade was a shabby, ramshackle group of stragglers ambling along after two equally shabby, ramshackle camels. They were led by a man carrying a banner embroidered with "Whittier Shriners." That evening, the downtown casinos were full of Shriners who had discarded their fancy dress and were pumping away at the slots and whooping it up at the craps tables. Unlike Whittier's favorite son, Richard Nixon, none of them played poker.

As the days passed, I spent a good deal of time at the bedroom window, watching for a change in the relentlessly fine weather. At dusk, the haze cleared and the sunset came rose-pink beyond the folded mountains. One evening, a sliver of new moon poised above them, briefly upstaging the moving glitter of the town below. But by then I was sufficiently under the spell of the place to wonder if seeing the new moon through glass boded bad luck.

ONE afternoon, I walked the dozen and a half blocks to the Gambler's Book Club, which is in a working-class residential area just off Charleston Boulevard, between downtown and the Strip. Within a few blocks of the hotel—past the bus station and the Nevada National Bank, with its sign offering "Drive-In TV Banking"—the sidewalks gave out, the tourists disappeared. The houses were one-story and makeshift, like encampments of industrial nomads, with elderly, battered cars parked in front of them. But each was set in its own little garden, shaded by palm trees or tatty cottonwoods or bougainvillea, and the wide streets were miraculously quiet after the din of Glitter Gulch. Birds chirped from the trees, children played on the parched grass, and there were dogs sleeping in the shade under the porches. In four weeks in Clark County, these were the only pets I saw, apart from two Seeing Eye dogs waiting patiently while their blind owners primed the slots at the Mint.

The Gambler's Book Club has a gigantic triangular sign suspended point downward over its entrance but is otherwise unlike anything else in Las Vegas. It is a bookshop, a publishing house, a printshop, a mail-order service, and also a club where gamblers, theorists, writers, researchers, journalists, and kibitzers—most of them visitors—drop in to browse and chat and find out who else is in town. The bookshop proper, which used to

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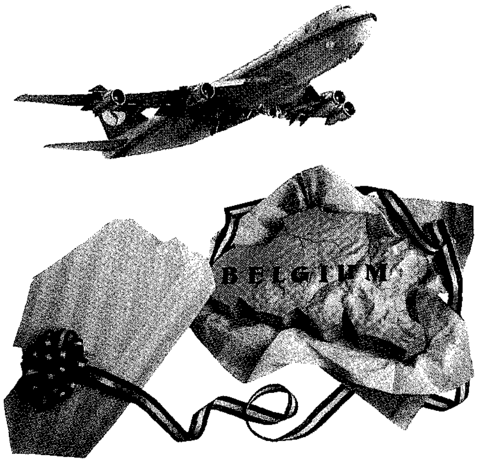

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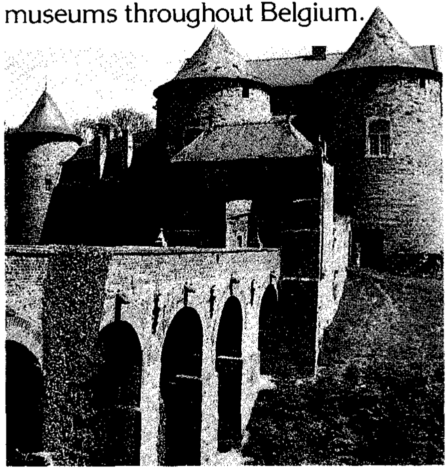
SURPRISE! Mussels in Brussels are a must. But be warned: In Belgian restaurants, a serving for one is more than enough for two.



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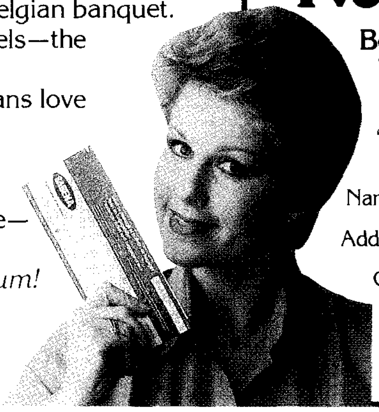

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Through the years, Buicks have been honored to occupy rather special places in many American hearts and driveways.

And, we're happy to report that although a lot has changed recently, that hasn't. People still view ownership of a Buick as a singularly good idea.

Perhaps because Buicks are, as always, uncommon cars. Built with a common philosophy. Based on an enlightened notion which holds that a car can be at once both elegant and efficient.

Better mileage. Better miles.

In the past 9 years, based on an analysis of EPA estimates, Buick's average fleet EPA estimated MPG figure has increased by 68%.

What's really at the heart of it is a rethinking of the automobile. One in which both operating efficiency and space efficiency are top priorities.

Take the trim Skylark for example. Its standard power comes from a very economical 4-cylinder engine. Which accounts in great part for its impressive gas economy.

But to assure that the people inside have plenty of room, it's fitted with front-wheel drive, which eliminates the large bump, formerly caused by the transmission, and the engine is mounted sideways so it won't impinge on passenger space.

However, the Skylark isn't designed just to give you the kind of room you expect from a Buick. It's also a matter of interior fittings. That's why you'll find that the fabrics used in the Skylark Limited are the same ones used in the posh Electra Limited. A small thing, perhaps. But it does give you an idea

		EST. HWY.	EPA EST. MPG	EST. HWY RANGE	EST. DRIVING RANGE	FUEL TANK CAPACITY
BUICK SKYHAWK	1.8 Liter L-4#	46	28	625	380	13.6
BUICK SKYLARK	2.5 Liter L-4	42	27	613	394	14.6
BUICK CENTURY	2.5 Liter L-4	39	24	612	377	15.7
	4.3 Liter Diesel V-6#	42	26	697	432	16.6
BUICK REGAL	3.8 Liter V-6*	30	21	543	380	18.1
	3.8 Liter Turbo V-6	29	18	525	326	18.1
	4.3 Liter Diesel V-6#	37	25	733	495	19.8
BUICK LESABRE	3.8 Liter V-6*	27	19	675	475	25.0
	5.7 Liter Diesel V-8#†	38	22	988	572	26.0
BUICK ELECTRA	4.1 Liter V-6*	29	18	725	450	25.0
	5.7 Liter Diesel V-8#	38	22	988	572	26.0
BUICK RIVIERA	4.1 Liter V-6*	29	17	612	359	21.1
	3.8 Liter Turbo V-6#*	27	16	569	337	21.1
	5.7 Liter Diesel V-8#	36	21	821	479	22.8

Use the estimated MPG for comparison. Your mileage and range may differ depending on speed, distance, weather. Actual highway mileage and range lower. Estimated driving and highway range obtained by multiplying mileage estimates by fuel tank capacity. *Estimates and range lower in California. Some Buicks are equipped with engines produced by other GM divisions, subsidiaries, or affiliated companies worldwide. See your Buick dealer for details. †With available automatic transmission with overdrive. #Optional.

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Across the Buick line, the look is clean. Crisp. Tailored. Smooth, yet angular. So that air is guided up, over, under and around the car with a minimum of turbulence. That, of course, means less air resistance which aids fuel economy.

Two noteworthy examples of this relationship between aerodynamic efficiency and visual appeal are the rakish Buick Regal and the Buick Century.

The Century, incidentally, is one of the most aerodynamic Buicks ever.

And even cars like the roomy, elegant full-size Electra and LeSabre have been designed with a keen eye toward aerodynamics.

An outstanding choice of engines.

Under the hood, you'll find Buicks have a lot in common too. Namely, diversity.

Look at the chart on the lower left side of this ad, and you'll see some of the choices. As well as the impressive EPA figures they generate.

By this time, you should be getting the idea that a Buick can be tailored to almost any criteria imaginable. But lest there be a speck of doubt remaining, we'd like to present two more innovative pieces of engineering.

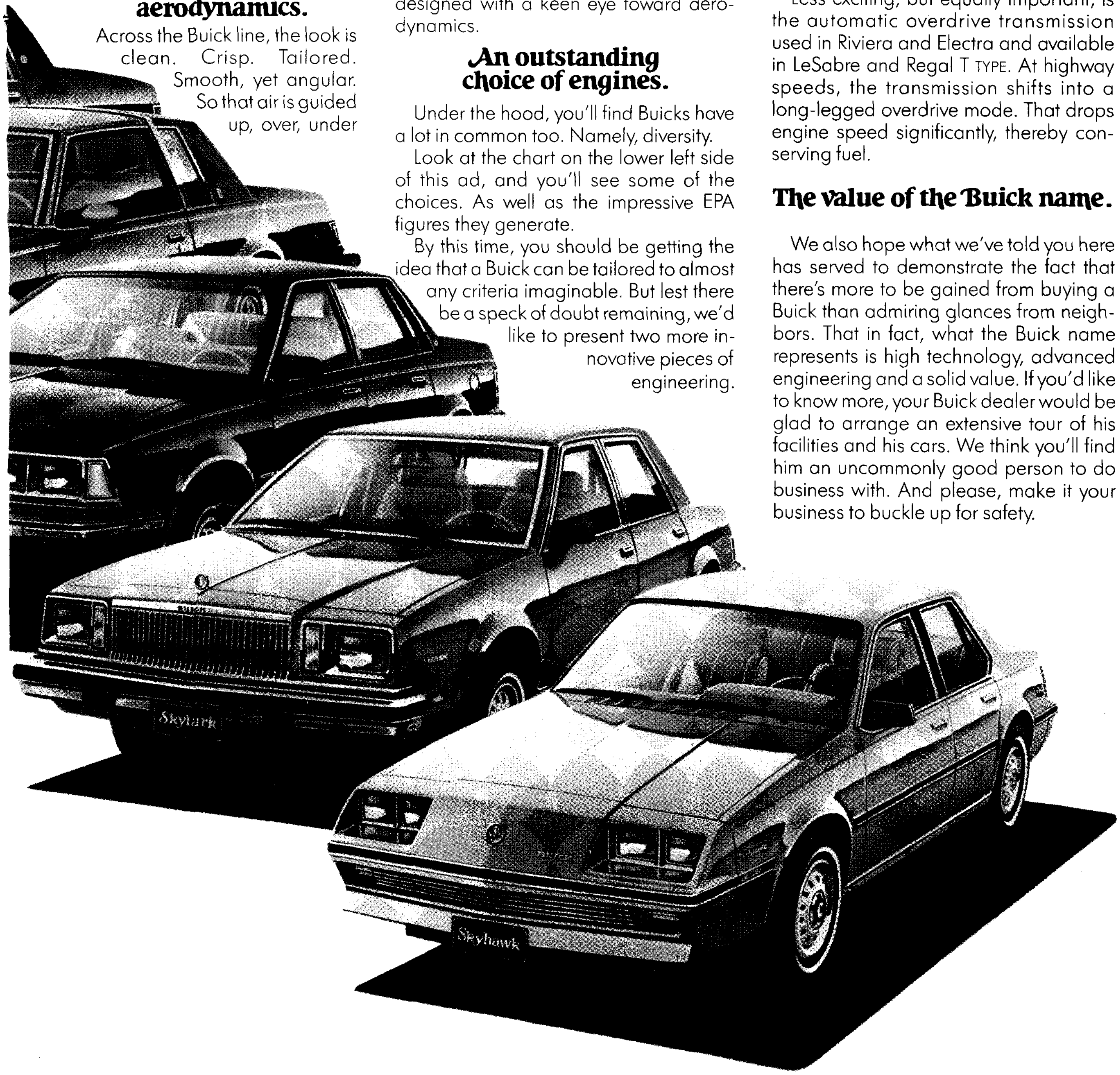
Turbocharging and overdrive.

In the mid-seventies, we introduced the concept of turbocharging to the V-6 engine. Formerly found mostly in exotic racing machinery, or breathtakingly expensive foreign cars, we made it happily at home in the mid-size, V-6 powered Regal T TYPE. Now it resides not only there but in the Riviera T TYPE as well.

Less exciting, but equally important, is the automatic overdrive transmission used in Riviera and Electra and available in LeSabre and Regal T TYPE. At highway speeds, the transmission shifts into a long-legged overdrive mode. That drops engine speed significantly, thereby conserving fuel.

The value of the Buick name.

We also hope what we've told you here has served to demonstrate the fact that there's more to be gained from buying a Buick than admiring glances from neighbors. That in fact, what the Buick name represents is high technology, advanced engineering and a solid value. If you'd like to know more, your Buick dealer would be glad to arrange an extensive tour of his facilities and his cars. We think you'll find him an uncommonly good person to do business with. And please, make it your business to buckle up for safety.



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be a pizza parlor, is a restful, rather scholarly room with over a thousand titles on the shelves—from thrillers to mathematical treatises, all of them related to gambling. Behind the shop, in what used to be the rambling premises of an Italian-food company, are offices, storerooms, rooms where books are bound and packed, and all the smooth gadgetry of modern business: electronic typesetting machines and computers for handling the inventory and the mail-order lists. The rare books—including four autographed by Edmond (According to) Hoyle himself, the only begetter of gambling rules—are kept in what was once a meat freezer.

The proprietors of this extraordinary specialist enterprise are John and Edna Luckman. On the principle that people live out their names (the manager of an English West Country crematorium is a Mr. Ash), Luckman began his career as a bookmaker in Santa Monica, then came to Las Vegas, where he worked in the casinos for fifteen years, starting as a blackjack dealer and eventually becoming a pit boss at the Tropicana. But gambling interested him more as a subject than as a way of life. He became infatuated with old books on gaming, and began acquiring them—his collection is now in the library of the University of Nevada—and he turned to printing when a Las Vegas church elder parked a printing press in his carport. Luckman is also a do-it-yourself enthusiast, happiest when he has a screwdriver in his hand, and the machine fascinated him. He tried printing his own stationery, then bought better equipment and decided to reprint some of his gambling books that were no longer in copyright. He started with "The Racing Maxims and Methods of 'Pittsburg Phil,'" based on an interview with a legendary horse bettor, and branched out into a series of "Facts" books—"Facts of Blackjack," of craps, of keno, of roulette, of slots—which were simple paperback guides to help the Vegas punters. The "Facts" books have now sold well over two million copies, and Luckman's mom-and-pop business has an annual turnover of more than half a million dollars. It also has a mailing list of customers from Indonesia to Poland. The list is particularly strong on inmates of state prisons. The wardens of federal penitentiaries usually do not allow Luckman's publications in their institutions, and he approves of their decision—"I think they should stock up on law books"—but disapproves of the manager of a local casino who has refused to sell his books because they advise moderation.

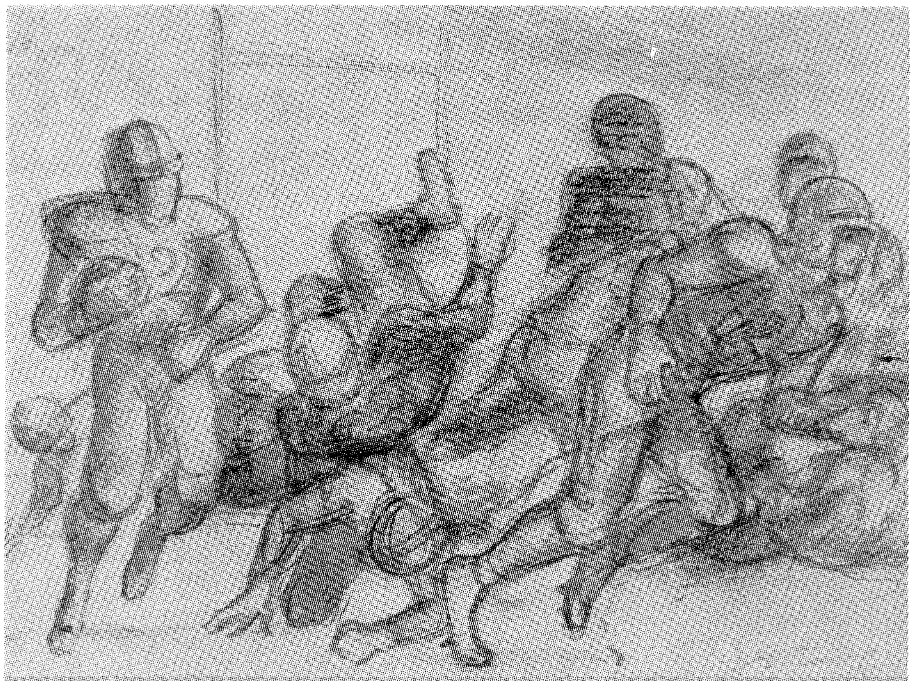
The advice is typical of the man and the whole enterprise. Luckman gambles hardly at all, and only for very small sums. His assistant, Howard Schwartz, who edits the club's magazines, *Casino & Sports* and *Systems & Methods*, is a thin, diffident, academic young man who used to be a schoolteacher in Colorado and calls himself "a frightened, conservative bettor." Both of them have the obsessed enthusiasm of the scholar for his special subject, and both are slightly contemptuous of the fact that so few of their customers are locals. "I bet we don't have six dealers who come here on a regular basis," Luckman says. "Players aren't readers." He seems to believe that anyone who gambles merely for the money or the thrill of action is somehow missing the subtlety of the enterprise. He is a bluff, friendly man with a drooping face and thick horn-rimmed glasses, but his attitude toward his clients is philosophical, resigned, like that of a social worker toward a street gang.

Several of his authors are academics captivated by the mathematics of gambling or, at a lower level, adept at offering deanlike advice to casino freshmen. Very few are professional gamblers, who, according to Mickey Appleman, are usually "unsuccessful, talented people, highly intelligent but unable to fit in with the straight world." An exception is David Sklansky, who makes his living at the poker tables and in 1981 had written four books for Luckman, including an ambitious treatise called "Poker Theory." In other ways, however, he fits Appleman's definition precisely. The son of a professor of mathematics, he grew up in Teaneck, New Jersey, and attended the University of Pennsylvania. "Not Penn State," he insists. "The University of Pennsylvania. There's a major difference: the University of Pennsylvania is part of the Ivy League." It is not a distinction likely to impress his gambling colleagues, but it matters to him, even though he dropped out after a couple of years. "I didn't like taking courses I wasn't interested in," he said. "I didn't want to go through all that rigmarole." Since he had inherited his father's mathematical ability, he took a job as an actuary, but that, too, did not last. "One day, I came up with a new technique for solving a problem—a shortcut that made it a third less time-consuming. When I explained it to my boss, all he said was 'If you want to do it that way, it's O.K. by me.' He refused to pass the idea on to anyone else. In other words, I knew something no one else knew, but I got no recognition for it." In appearance, Sklansky is like one of Dostoevski's intolerant student revolutionaries: broad face, trimmed beard, steel spectacles, styleless clothes. His voice is careful but faintly obsessed. "In poker, if you're better than anyone else you make immediate money," he says. "If there's something I know about the game that the other person doesn't, and if he's not willing to learn or can't understand, then"—his voice rises, emphasizing each word—"*I take his money*. By rights, that guy who ran the actuarial office should have been broke; he shouldn't have been my boss. But in the business world things aren't like that. I was always being told what to do by incompetent people, and I hated it. The world is full of idiots, and I can't handle it. I can't handle the politics involved. But this town gives me what I want. I like the freedom of the gambler's life, I like being my own boss, I like the way you are rewarded directly according to your ability, not according to what people think of you."

Still, Sklansky is in some respects an odd man out among the Vegas professionals. The top players take pride in the times they have gone broke and bounced back; their overriding ambition is to beat their peers, not the suckers. In contrast, Sklansky has never been broke, and does not intend to start now. His attitude is encapsulated in the first chapter of his "Poker Theory," which is called "Getting Off on the Right Foot." It begins, "When we play poker, we must realize, before anything else, that we are *out to make money*." The italics are his, and they are typical of the dour, businessman's fervor with which he approaches the game. Perhaps a comfortable childhood in Teaneck, New Jersey, is not the best preparation for a lifetime's commitment to anything as marginal or disreputable as poker.

I asked Sklansky what his parents thought of his profession.

"Initially, they disapproved," he



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said. "But then not so very many people have three titles to their name in the big catalogue 'Books in Print.' After they saw that, they began to feel a little different about what I do. And I make good money; that always makes parents proud. It's obvious to them now that I'm not a degenerate gambler. In fact, there are people in this town who say I don't have any gamble in me at all. I don't consider that an insult. On the contrary, I think of myself as a game player, not a gambler. When I was at school, I was very good at mathematical aptitude; on the standardized tests, I usually got perfect scores. But my best subject was probability, which depends less on mathematics than on ingenuity and the ability to think. It is that ability which I have applied to poker. In my book on theory, I stress logic above everything else. Whenever I lose a pot, I sit for a minute and work out what I did wrong and how I could have done better. The champion players have an incredible natural instinct for the game. I don't have that instinct, but I try to make up for it by study and thinking. What took them ten years of experience I can work out in an hour with a pencil and paper. I'm like someone who has studied the biomechanics of golf and never makes technical errors, while they are like people with such huge talent for the game that their mistakes don't matter. But sometimes they come to me with complicated problems, for technical advice, just as Jack Nicklaus would go to his coach, even though he can beat him."

By any normal standards, of course, Sklansky is an exceptionally good player, with endless powers of concentration. "Everything that happens at the table has meaning," he says, and he is able to think out logically the implications of each small sign in each new deal. But that huge natural talent the champions possess is a question of imagination rather than logic, and it enables them to take cards that Sklansky would never consider playing and turn them into winning hands. For example, in a game of no-limit hold 'em Jack Straus was dealt the worst two cards in the pack, a seven and a deuce of different suits. But he was on a rush, so he raised anyway, and only one other player stayed with him. The flop was dealt: 7,3,3, giving Straus two pairs—sevens and threes. He bet again, but as he did so he saw his opponent's hand reach quickly for his

Face to face with another world.

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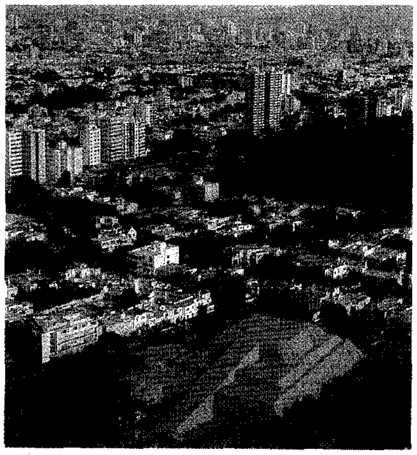

When one thinks of Peru, Machu Picchu comes immediately to mind. But this city is just one of the incredibilities that make a visit to Peru so richly rewarding. No where else but Peru would you see a llama colorfully decorated on its way to a festival in the most primitive of canoes. Everywhere such vestiges of a long forgotten civilization delight and surprise the eye.

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chips, and he knew he had made a mistake. The man, he realized, had a big pair in the hole; with great confidence, he raised Straus five thousand dollars. At that point, the logical move was to fold, since Straus was certain he was beaten and only a bluff could save him. But he called, thereby sowing doubt in the other player's mind. The dealer turned over the fourth card: a deuce. It paired Straus's second hole card but did not improve his hand, since there was already a communal pair of threes on the table. Without hesitating, Straus bet eighteen thousand dollars. There was a long, long silence while the other man considered the implications of the bet. Then Straus leaned forward, smiling his most charming, lopsided smile. "I'll tell you what," he said. "You give me one of those little old twenty-five-dollar chips of yours and you can see either one of my cards, whichever you choose." Another silence. Finally, the man tossed over a yellow-and-green chip and pointed to one of the cards face down in front of Straus. Straus turned it over: a deuce. Another long silence. The only logical explanation for Straus's offer was that the two cards in front of him were the same, so the flop gave him a full house with three deuces. The other man folded his winning hand. "It's just a matter of simple psychology," Straus said later.

In poker, as in everything else, imagination starts where logic falters, and transforms reality for its own ends, as Straus did with his unplayable cards. His move was not just a bluff; it was play in the truest sense—a kind of wit, both stylish and elegant. "Everybody has a romance with life," Mickey Appleman says. "But most people relinquish it as they grow up and settle down with a job and a family. There are some people, though, who never give it up; they hold on to that portion of their childhood. For them, gambling is a replacement of the fantasies they had as children. I guess I'm like that. For me, the fantasy in gambling is not monetary. It's a question of fulfillment: being who I really am, doing things well, being involved—just feeling good."

Appleman's background is very much like Sklansky's, and in terms of poker ability there is probably not much difference between them. But Appleman became a gambler after a long period of confusion and self-questioning, because gambling solved problems he had previously been un-

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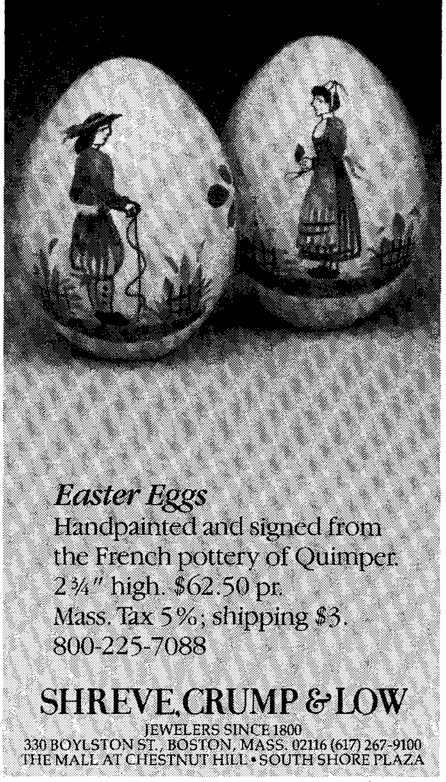

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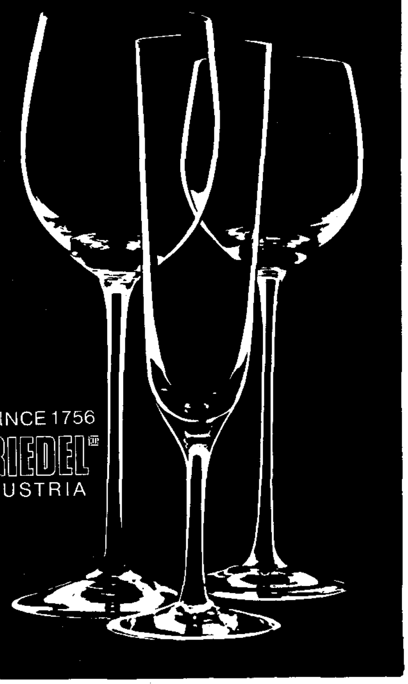

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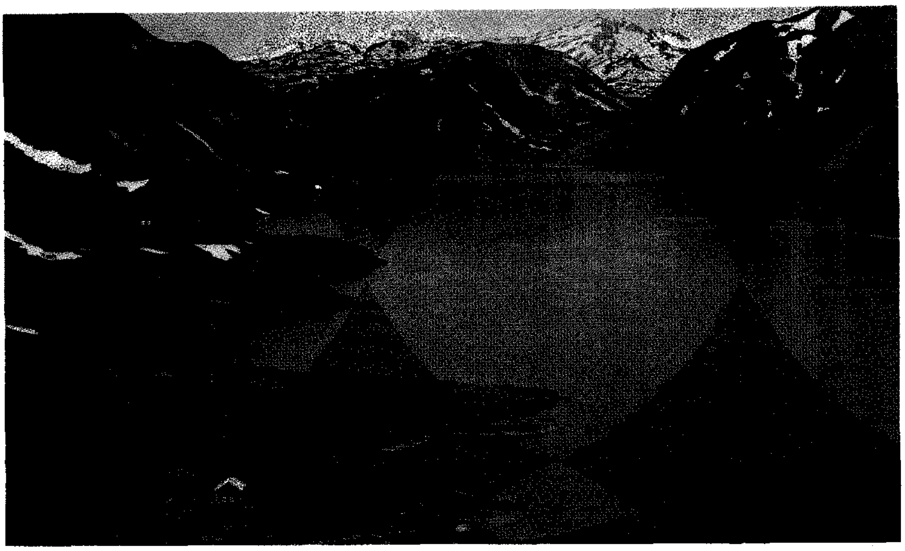
able to cope with and, by some absurd psychological sleight of hand, was far more emotionally rewarding than his previous career—work with the deprived and the addicted, for which he had thrown over the promise of the lucrative career his M.B.A. had qualified him for. Sklansky, on the other hand, is haunted by "the straight world" and sees poker as "a stepping stone" to something else. "The ability to analyze gambling situations is a microcosm of more important things," he told me. "Almost anything can be put into a mathematical model, although most people don't know that. I'm able to take nonmathematical situations and analyze them using logical techniques. Eventually, I would hope that the fact that I've written books and am therefore well known would enable me to branch into other fields. Perhaps some company will think, David Sklansky has the ability to look at situations and see logically what's supposed to be done, so maybe he's worth taking a shot at. We don't need him to start as a clerk; we'll let him skip fourteen steps and make him vice-president in charge of systems analysis."

It seems a strangely inappropriate ambition for a man who has settled in the fantasy capital of the world and makes a living from the persistent, logical exploitation of other people's weaknesses. But, as John Luckman said, "players aren't readers." So perhaps the few who, like Sklansky, not only read but also write about what they are doing are so out of the usual Vegas run that they develop a disproportionate belief in the power of the printed word. Luckman himself, despite his turnover and his mailing list, has no such illusions.

FOR the westbound wagon trains, the Nevada desert was a barrier, a destructive element to be suffered and endured. Now, thanks to air-conditioning, the weather is the state's main attraction. Elsewhere in the United States that May, there were cold snaps and sudden thaws; there were tornado warnings in Alabama and hurricanes in Florida. But in Las Vegas the weather was a steady state, as in a controlled experiment. The sun shone, the desert wind blew, the illuminated thermometer at the top of the Mint registered eighty-five to ninety-five degrees day after day. Then, on the morning of May 15, 1981, a minor miracle occurred. When I got out of bed and went to the window, the sun



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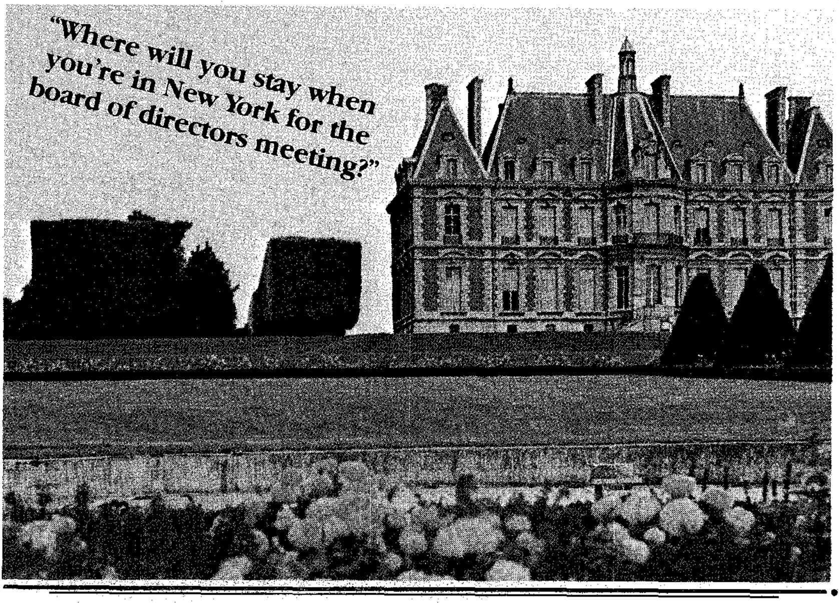
was gone. Beyond the parking lots, the pawnshops, and the railroad tracks, the mountains were shrouded in dark veils, which were vaguely wavering at the edges and were moving slowly toward the town. By noon, there was rain. The air was cool, and the rackety streets of Glitter Gulch were pervaded by the faint, musky scent of dust finally laid. Later that afternoon, the little pool at the Mint was empty, fresh, delectable. The following day, it was closed. The air temperature had dropped to a mere seventy-three degrees, which by Vegas standards is too cold for swimming.

But when the main, and final, event of the 1981 World Series of Poker began, three days later, the heat had clamped down again. Despite the air-conditioning, Binion's Horseshoe was sweltering, although the contestants did not seem to notice. Set apart from the journalists, the television crews, and the spectators, who had been packed against the rails since early morning, were seventy-five poker players—two more than the previous year—who had put up ten thousand dollars apiece for the privilege of playing no-limit hold 'em for the title of World Champion. "That's American democracy," a journalist from New York said. "It costs ten G's to enter, but *anyone* who's got that kind of money to spare can sit down and take his chances with the best players in the world." I had the impression that if he could have written it off against expenses he would have sat down himself. And that is what distinguishes the poker tournament from other sporting events. When Norman Mailer went to Kinshasa in 1974 to cover the Ali-Foreman fight, he may have gone on a training run with Ali, but not even Mailer, who prides himself on his boxing and still works out regularly, would ever have dreamed of going into the ring with the man. In the looming presence of Ali or Foreman, there are limits to the illusions one can have about one's physique and athletic prowess. Not so in poker. The seventy-five entrants in the big event are all mental athletes of exceptional ability, the fine tip of a pyramid of well over fifty million players. But they are not much to look at: mostly middle-aged and overweight, with sallow, pouchy faces, bloodshot eyes, nicotine-stained fingers, five-o'clock shadow.

Stu Ungar, the defending champion, is in his middle twenties but looks like a scrawny teen-ager, loose-jointed and deathly pale, with a ner-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vous, rapid-fire, slurring voice and a slightly simian jaw—"a dead ringer," said Jack Straus, who is fond of him, "for Zira, the doctor in 'The Planet of the Apes.' " Johnny Moss never progressed beyond the second grade, Puggy Pearson left school when he was fourteen, and another top player, I was told, can barely read or write. Yet all of them know the precise percentages offered by every pot; at any point of the deal they can tell you which cards have already fallen, how many are left in the pack, how many will help them, and the exact odds on their making a hand. They know all this with complete accuracy, but instinctively, through card sense, experience, and innate mathematical ability. Even those who have gone through school often adopt an innocent, aw-shucks, country-boy air to confuse the opposition. That, too, is poker.

So the intelligent, educated outsider can persuade himself that he is in with a chance, particularly since there is an element of luck in any card game. Chess is a game of pure information—like poker with all the cards exposed—where the better player will always win; that is why a computer can be programmed to play it so well. But the only way a computer could be made to play top-level poker would be by introducing a randomizing factor into the program which would correspond both to the element of bluff and to the random way the cards fall. When the cards are particularly kind, even a sucker can beat a really good player. But not for long. That is why the poker tables at Las Vegas are called "the graveyards of home-town champs." Poker players who have beaten their local games in all corners of the world come to Vegas to test their skills, like tennis players converging on Wimbledon. Nearly all of them go home broke.

AT midday on Monday, May 18, 1981, seventy-five of the most spectacular survivors in the poker world were milling nervously around the Sombrero Room. Less than a quarter of them had any real hope of walking away with the title, but even those elect few were strung up like race horses. They seemed to have difficulty staying still. They moved about from group to group, from table to table, chatting briefly and then moving on, hovering, listening to the gossip, getting another perspective, sizing up the opposition, charging themselves up on the excitement. Even Doyle Brunson

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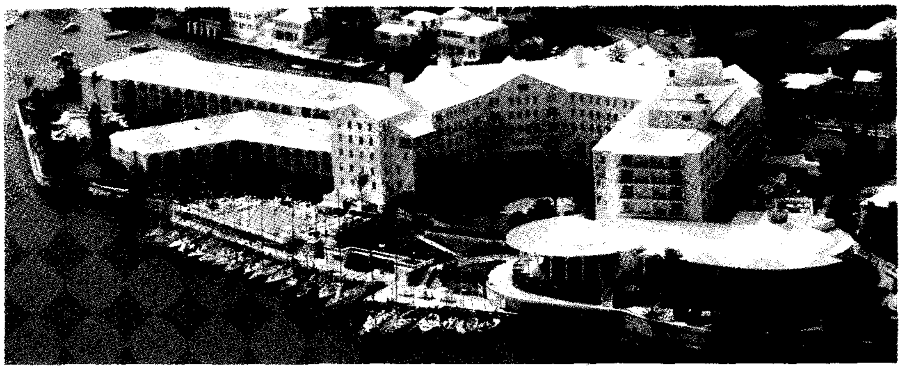

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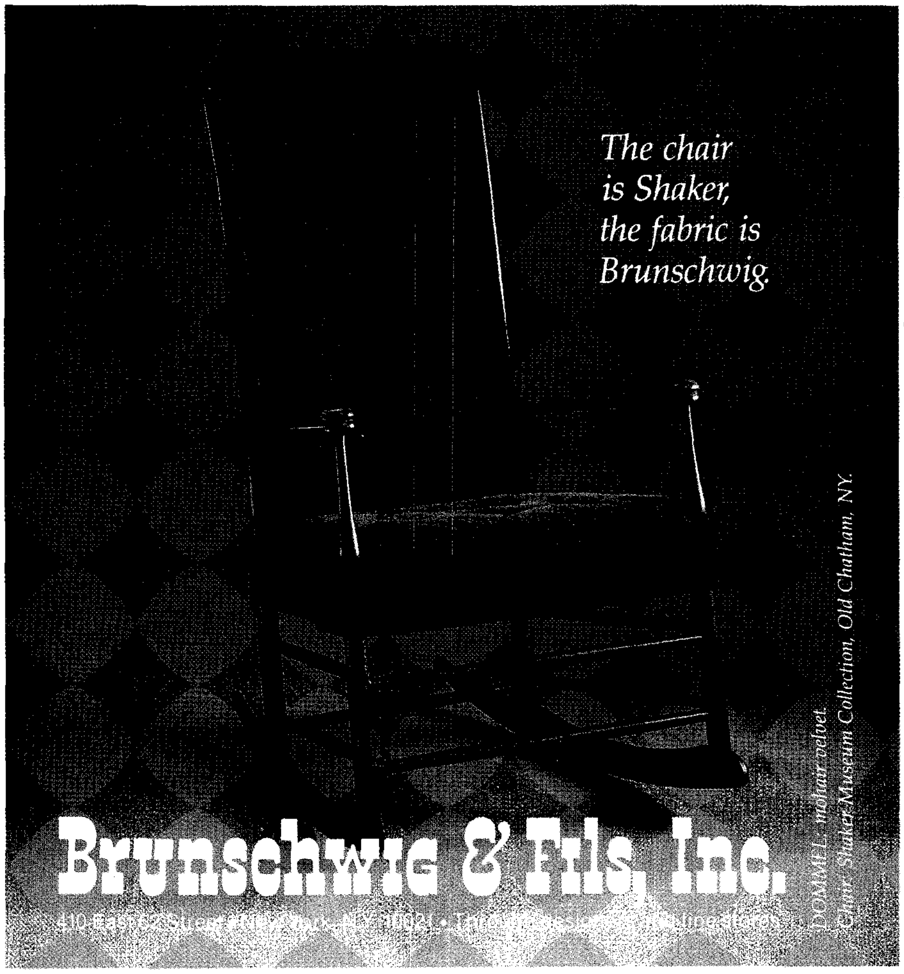

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seemed nervous, although his large, comforting presence translated tension into a faint, subliminal gloom. "The only way you can approach it is to think it's just another poker game," he said to me. He shifted uneasily in his chair, like an iceberg settling in the water. "That's not strictly true, of course. Today is the biggest day of the year for poker players. And every year it gets bigger. Seventy-five contestants means three-quarters of a million prize money. Three hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars for the winner. Whichever way you reckon it, that's a good payday."

The local bookmakers had made him the favorite to win the title for the third time—the previous year, Stu Ungar had beaten him in the final—but that was an added burden, and he did not want it. When I mentioned it, he shook his head doubtfully and said, "I'm not playing as well as last year." The iceberg settled farther in the water. "But I'll play hard and maybe something will happen. You have to get a lot of breaks to come through that many players. In a freeze-out, when you can't reach back and take more chips, the best player won't necessarily win. There's a lot of luck involved. I guess that's what attracts so many players. You have to have the right cards at the right time in order to get down to the last table. Once you're there, then the best player has a good chance. The most important money is your first ten thousand. If you can get your chips up to twenty thousand, where you can lose a pot without crippling yourself, then you're in with a chance. But if I lose the first couple of pots I play there is not much I can do about it; the next one I put money in I've got to win. That makes you push your hands a little bit when you start getting low on chips. I never was much of a short-stack player. I like to have a lot of money in front of me. If another guy has more, it affects my style of play. Some of the others aren't like that—they just sit there and wait and try to catch a hand and double up. I like to chop around and win small pots and gradually build up my stack. Then if a big pot comes I play it. But the main thing about tournaments is to try to win small pots early, then hope to catch a break or two. Everybody at the last table will have had his share of luck."

I asked him what he meant by not playing well, since he had been winning steadily in the side games, and Brunson, even when slightly off form, is better than almost any other player.

"The first time I won the tournament, I got lucky in a couple of key pots: I had the worst hand going in but managed to outdraw the guy each time when all my chips were in the center. But the second time I won the title I didn't make a single mistake the whole three days. I never jeopardized my stack unnecessarily, I read my opponents right every time, I threw away strong hands when I sensed I was beaten, and my chips never went down; they just built and built all the way. This year . . ." He shrugged. The iceberg quaked slightly. "I dunno. If I can get some soft spots to start with, so I can build up my stack . . ." He rose majestically to his feet. "I'm going to go supervise the draw and make sure they don't stick me at the same table as Johnny Moss, Bobby Baldwin, Puggy Pearson, and Jack Straus, the way they do every year."

Jack Straus was complaining about the prize money. "I don't reckon it should be divided up—half to the winner, twenty per cent to the runner-up, and so on," he said. "Nine people—the whole last table—are going to walk away with cash. That's not what a competition is about. The winner should take the whole seven-fifty."

Today, even Straus seemed to be on edge. He shifted from foot to foot, like a horse sensing bad weather, and peered about, from his enormous height, over the crowded heads. A slim, straight-backed young woman in a mauve jump suit was hesitating at the entrance to the Sombrero Room. Straus signalled to her—half wave, half salute. She waved back and threaded her way through the crowd to join him.

Most of the women poker players have lacquered hair and tired faces, which make even the young ones look middle-aged. Betty Carey, however, is in her mid-twenties and looks younger. She has what used to be called "an outdoor-girl complexion," a narrow, Cupid's-bow upper lip, a disarming smile, and eyes like curiously carved ice: the upper lids straight, all the curve in the lower half. Her profile is slightly aquiline, like Samuel Beckett's, but is offset by a discreet mass of curls. A Renaissance face, the kind that Piero della Francesca painted in profile—not the kind of face common in Vegas. Yet she is also one of the most formidable poker players in the country, savagely competitive. Not

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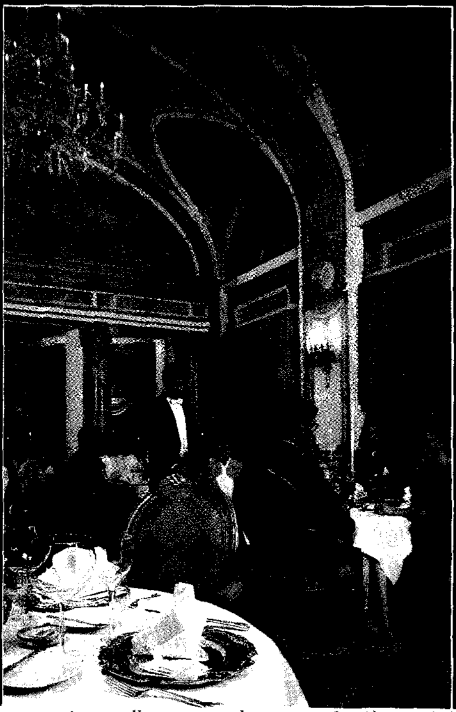

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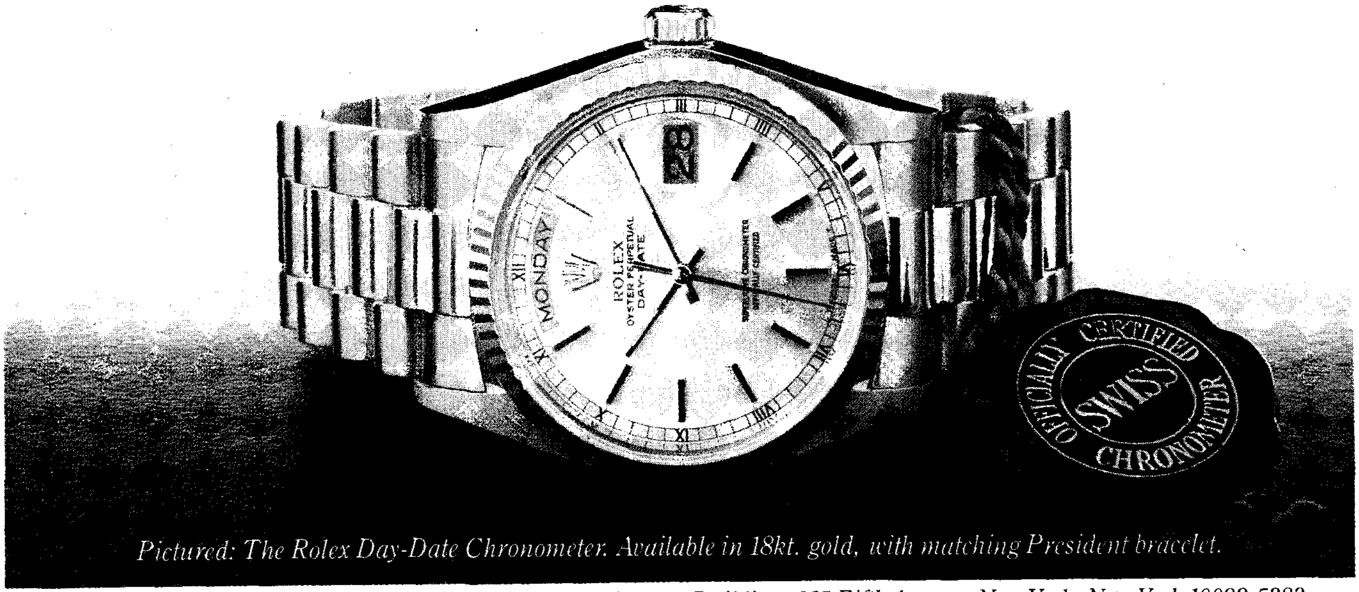

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only was she entered in the tournament but in the side games before the tournament's big event she was sitting down with the fiercest of the tigers—Brunson, Moss, Baldwin, Pearson—and taking their money night after night. Then Straus stopped her in her tracks.

My first sight of her had been at the beginning of that game: a demure and perilously young woman sitting across the table from six professional poker champions, like Chris Evert Lloyd taking on Borg, McEnroe, and Connors. She was very much at her ease, sipping wine, smiling at them over a mountain of black and gray chips so large that she was barely able to encircle it with her arms. Above them, her delicate, quattrocento head and shoulders seemed oddly out of proportion, as though the chips were some late, strange pregnancy. That was at eight o'clock, and she was winning well over two hundred thousand dollars. When the game ended, eight hours later, she was broke; thirty thousand had gone to Brunson, most of the rest to Straus when his full house beat her three eights.

Not long before, Straus had given her an ivory pendant as a present—an eighteenth-century Chinese gambling chip inscribed with two words, "Love" and "Dread." He had said, "It means you're going to love playing with those suckers, Betty, but you're going to dread playing with me." Now the prophecy had been fulfilled.

"You watch," Straus muttered as she joined us. "She's the only person who thinks the way I do." He touched her arm and smiled amiably down at her. "Betty," he said, "how do you reckon the prize money should be divided?"

She did not hesitate: "Winner take all."

"I told you so," Straus said triumphantly.

She smiled at him, and then glanced vaguely around the packed room. "Full house," she said.

"Here's hoping," Straus said.

The conversation languished.

Betty Carey is from Wyoming, and her mother still lives there. Her father was a war veteran, badly wounded in one leg, and the Wyoming cold was bad for his circulation. So during the winters he moved down to Las Vegas, where he set up as an importer of seafood for some of the downtown restaurants. Eleven years ago, when Betty was in her teens, he was killed

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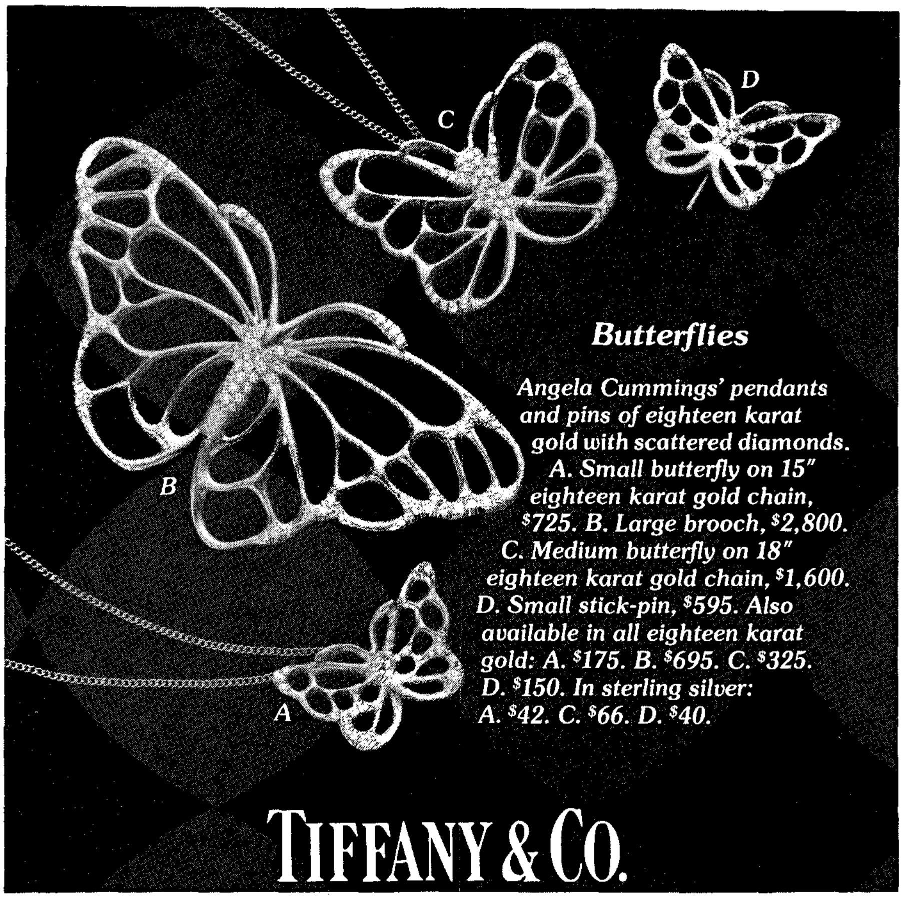

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in a road accident out in the Clark County desert.

"Blowout?" I asked her when I first met her, with Straus.

"Murdered." She spoke the word with no particular emphasis, as though it were "coronary" or "cancer." His car, she explained, had been forced off the road three times. Twice, he had managed to fight it back onto the pavement; the third time, it had overturned, killing him. I asked what had happened to the other driver. "He disappeared," she said laconically. "Case unsolved." But the episode gave her, at least, the measure of male aggression. Four years ago, she graduated to high-stakes poker, and since then, Straus said, she has become "boss gambler down there in Houston," where she now lives. Boss gambler also in Vegas until she found herself head to head with the charming but relentless Jack Straus. After that disaster, she disappeared from the Horseshoe for a few days, presumably to raise the cash to pay her debts. The evening she returned, she was standing with Straus in the Sombrero Room when a gambler to whom he owed money came up. Straus pulled out a gigantic wad of bills and began counting them out.

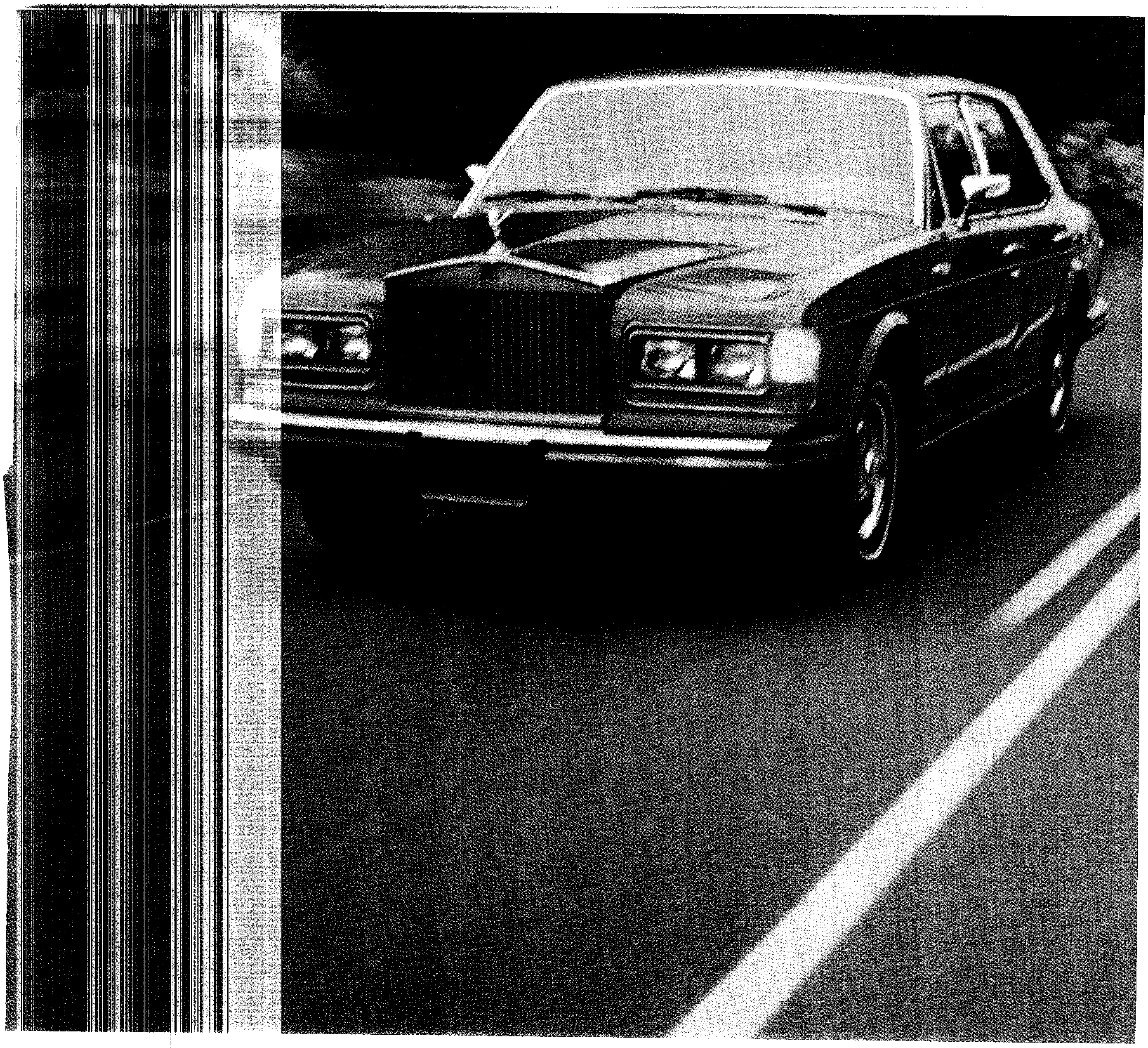
Carey smiled at him. "I just bet that's money you got from some po' li'l gal," she said.

"Sure is." Straus returned the roll to his back trouser pocket. "And I keep it right here, honey, next to my heart."

Now they were standing with Straus's twenty-one-year-old son—a beardless double of his father, equally tall—and Straus's gofer, Larry Morrell, who looks uncannily like the old movie comic Jerry Colonna: bald as a billiard ball, big black mustache, and an apparently unlimited supply of enthusiasm for everything. But on this occasion even Larry seemed to have run out of things to say.

"What's the time?" Straus asked fretfully.

Most of the Vegas gamblers are festooned with jewelry: gold rings stuck with outsize diamonds, heavy gold chains and bracelets, some with their names studded on them in diamonds, and every variant of the world's most expensive wristwatches. Even Doyle Brunson, who is not otherwise given to ostentation, wears an Audemars Piguet with diamond numerals and a platinum chain bracelet. But Straus wears no ornaments at all. "When I was a kid, I wanted a five-dollar watch, then a ten-dollar watch, then



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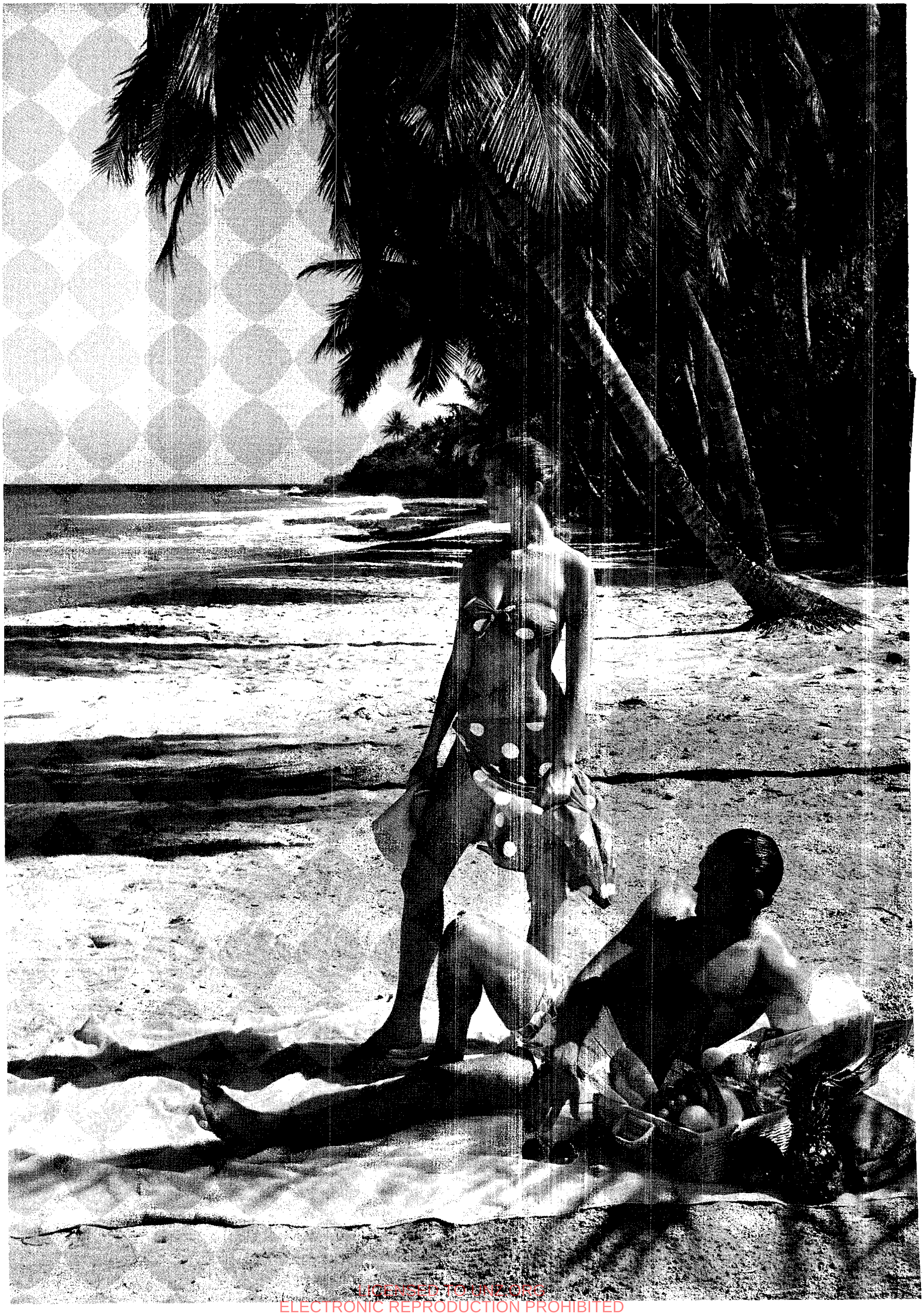

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a hundred-dollar watch," he said. "When I made money, I wanted a Rolex, then a Patek Philippe. Now I realize that the real luxury is not to know the time." But in the few minutes before the hold-'em World Championship began he seemed to be regretting that luxury.

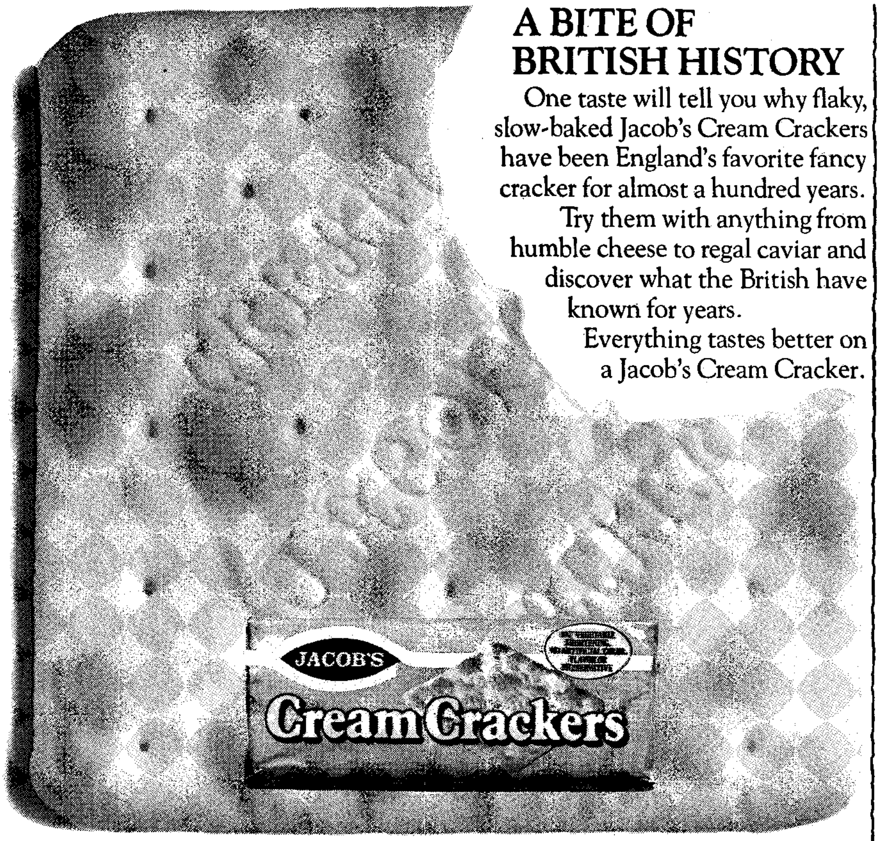
"Ten of one," Betty Carey said.

"Let's go," Straus said.

FOR weeks, the poker players had been dressed as though for a back-room game in a Texas pool hall: jeans and soiled T-shirts or cheap cotton plaid cowboy shirts from South Korea with imitation mother-of-pearl buttons. Now the poker room was like a fashion parade. Perhaps the presence of the CBS cameras had inspired the change, or perhaps it was the arrival, two nights before, of Crandall Addington, a bearded millionaire in oil and Texas real estate, who is an amateur, and who invariably sets the standard of elegance at the Horseshoe. Addington once played for five consecutive days and nights without loosening his Dior tie. Last year, he appeared in a mink Stetson. This year, his Stetson matched his white linen suit, white silk shirt, and white silk tie. His beard was glossy and was barbered with care.

Amarillo Slim Preston specializes in another kind of chic. He is tall, long-faced, and startlingly thin—someone once called him "the advance man for a famine"—and he dresses in a kind of cowboy baroque. His suit was bilious *yellow with brown suède shoulders* and trimming; on the sides of his lizardskin boots was the word "SLIM" in white leather; the crown of his Stetson was encircled by a rattlesnake skin, the creature's mouth gaping forward toward the brim, its rattle vertical on one side, like a feather.

None of the others even tried to compete with Addington and Slim, although several had chosen a part and were dressed for it. Gene Fisher, another amateur from Texas, wore a battered Stetson and a scarlet cavalry shirt, buttoned diagonally from waist to shoulder. With his silver hair and full silver mustache, he looked like a reincarnation of Kit Carson. One young cowboy was wearing a bright-blue Stetson and a black shirt embroidered with black silk curlicues. Ken Smith, who is also a chess master and was Bobby Fischer's second in charge of preparation for the Reykjavík marathon with Boris Spassky, wore what he always wears at competitions—a frock



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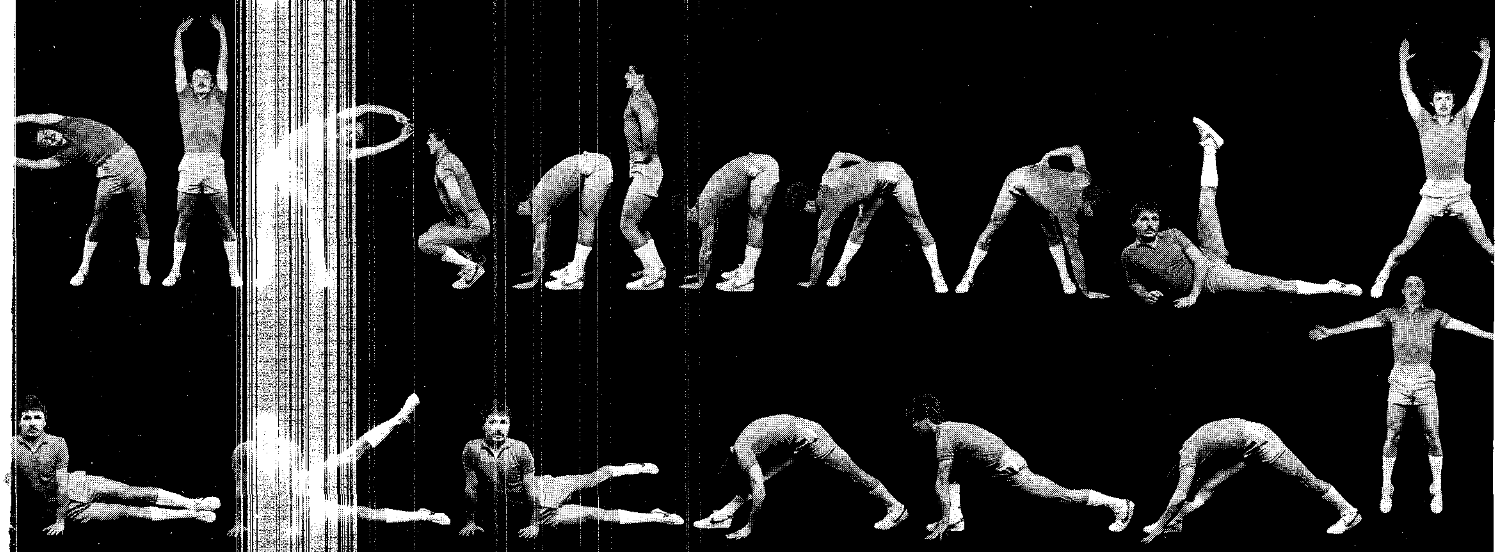

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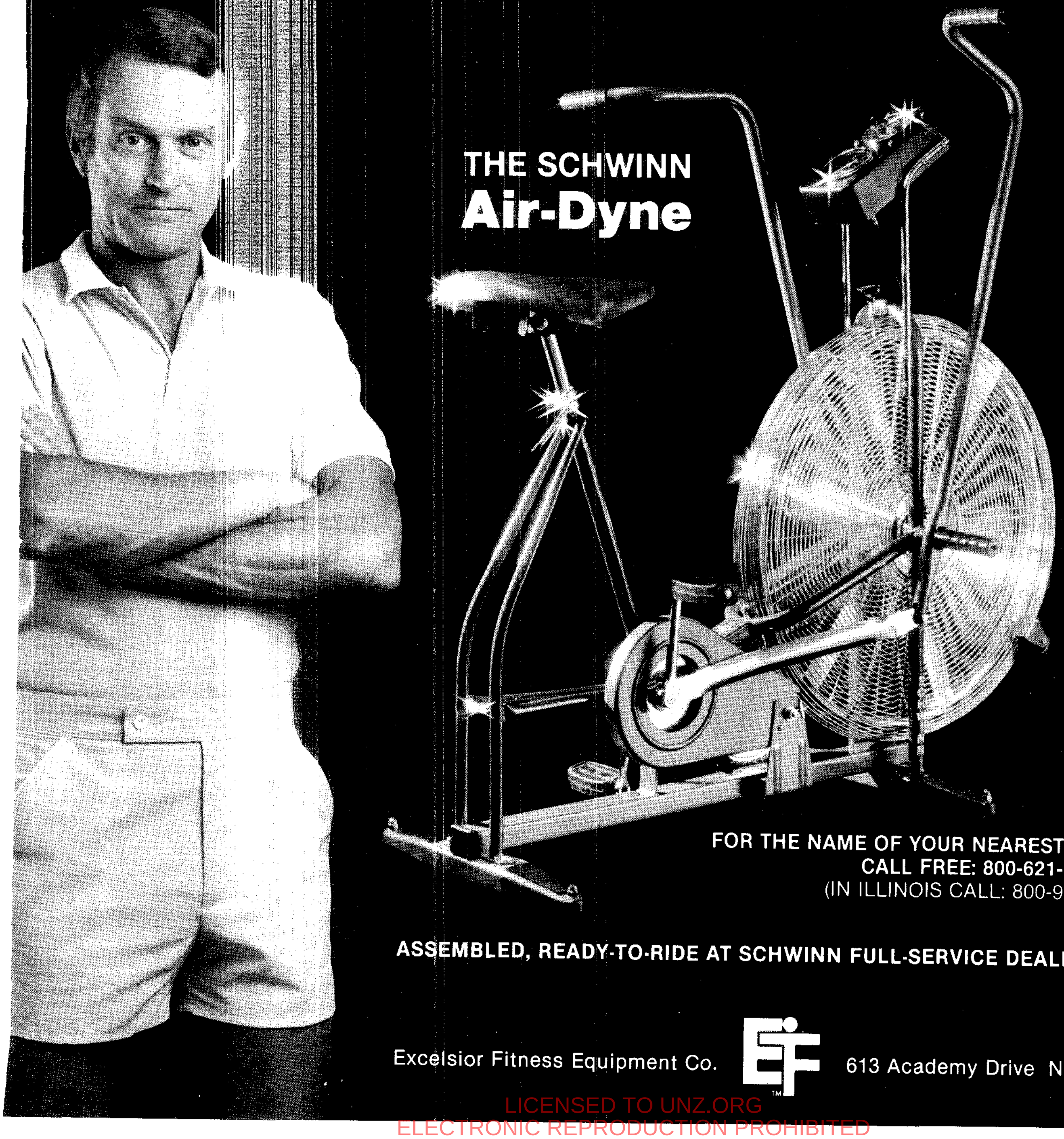

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coat and a decrepit top hat, which he claims was found in Ford's Theatre the night Lincoln was assassinated. Smith has a ragged beard, a squeaky voice, and a girth like that of Swinburne's giant slumbering boar: "the blind bulk of the immeasurable beast." Each time he wins a pot, he lumbers to his feet, doffs his topper to the audience, and pipes, "What a player!"

The others were less fashion-conscious, although, like the oysters in "Through the Looking-Glass," "Their coats were brushed, their faces washed, Their shoes were clean and neat." Brunson and Straus wore pale-blue suède jackets over navy-blue shirts and trousers. Chip Reese had abandoned his velours track suits and reverted to his Ivy League origins: gray flannel trousers and gray shirt with blue pinstripes. Bobby Baldwin was dressed in gray trousers and a gray Lacoste tennis shirt, at once sporting and sober, to suit his image. Even Mickey Appleman was wearing a neat beige corduroy jacket over his black T-shirt, and Stu Ungar wore a clean bowling shirt.

The tournament organizer, Eric Drache, seated the seventy-five players at eight tables by mixing numbered cards in a plastic bowl and drawing lots. They took their places slowly as he called their names, joking nervously among themselves about the unfairness of the draw, the relative strength of each table, their own lack of form. The spectators jostled for position at the rails, the lights blazed, the cameras whirred, the monotonous voice of the switchboard operator over the intercom—"Telephone call for Jack Binion," or "Telephone call for Eric Drache"—was temporarily stilled.

Jack Binion climbed onto a chair at the back of the room, directly under the banner announcing "BINION'S HORSESHOE PRESENTS THE WORLD SERIES OF POKER 1981." He beamed down on the crowd, looking dignified in a three-piece gray flannel suit and a free but discreet variation of the Old Etonian tie. He motioned for quiet, did not get it, then introduced the players over the babble of the casino: name, place of origin, a word or so of praise. His favorite description was "plenty tough." The players rose in turn from their seats, glanced furtively at the audience, avoided looking at the cameras, and sat down again quickly. The railbirds applauded each one—the local heroes enthusiastically, the rest politely.

There was a noisy pause, and then Frank Cutrona, the floor manager,

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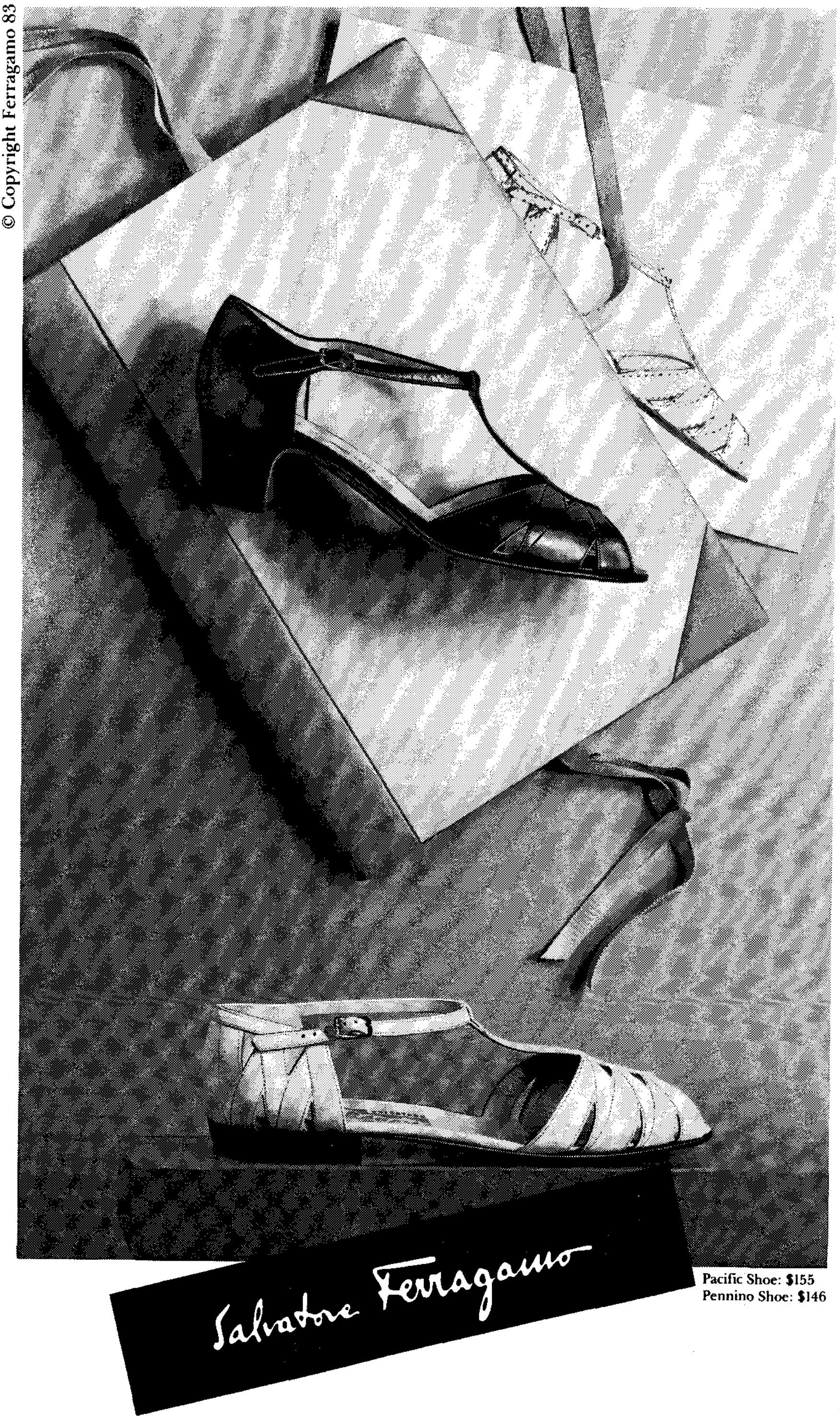
and his assistants bustled around the tables distributing ten-thousand-dollar racks of chips to some players who had entered at the last moment. Another pause while the players counted their chips and arranged them on the baize, each according to his own private architectural plan: neatly by colors or mixed in apparently haphazard ways; in tens, in twenties, in tall, unstable-looking towers of yellow-and-green twenty-fives, black hundreds, gray five hundreds. The dealers pulled back their cuffs to display the gold at their wrists, fanned out each pack of cards in an arc to check that it was complete, flipped it over face down, mixed it flat on the table, according to the Vegas formula, shuffled, cut, and began to deal. The crowd behind the rails craned solemnly forward, chomping gum, like cows at a gate.

THE first player was eliminated an hour and a half later. There was a brief rattle of applause as he got to his feet and nodded to his companions at the table. He looked sheepish. Ten thousand dollars is a great deal of money to spend on ninety minutes' entertainment. "Hunnerd an' eleven bucks a minute," muttered someone in the crowd, adding pedantically, "More or less."

By the time play stopped for early dinner, at five-thirty, fourteen more had gone, including several of the "plenty tough" players who had made it to the final table in other tournaments: Milo Jacobson, who lost to Brunson in the 1977 final; Charlie Dunwoody, fifth place in 1980; the actor Gabe Kaplan, sixth place in 1980 and winner of the 1979 Poker Classic in Reno; Gary (Bones) Berland, a formidable young player who was a runner-up in 1977.

For the first time, the conversation in the Sombrero Room was muted, and the wives and girlfriends seemed, also for the first time, to have a role to play—listening and shaking their heads while their men muttered to them about bad draws and dead cards. Johnny and Virgie Moss sat together in a far corner, heads close, her hand consolingly over his, like young marrieds. Near them, Louise Brunson watched anxiously while Doyle demolished a double helping of chocolate cake. Jack Straus, his mouth drawn down at the corners, sat hunched over a cup of coffee with his son and Larry. For the tournament, he had drawn a seat at a table with an elderly woman with red-dyed hair and more diamonds

Spring-Summer.



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than Harry Winston's shopwindow: diamonds at her throat and bosom, diamonds around both wrists, diamonds on every finger. Not only was she an amateur, she had only recently started to play hold 'em. But throughout the afternoon she had been hitting card after miracle card, and no one at the table could contain her. Straus's stack was already down to two thousand dollars, and his mood was black. "If he loses to her, he'll be in a bad temper for a year," his son said.

ALL poker is a form of social Darwinism: the fit survive, the weak go broke. Walter Matthau once said, "The game exemplifies the worst aspects of capitalism that have made our country so great." Since Las Vegas provides continuous action at the highest level and for the highest stakes, most of the fittest eventually find their way there and discover, with startling rapidity, whether or not they really are survivors. "It's like an experiment in evolution in which you have speeded-up time," said David Sklansky. But in freeze-out no-limit poker, where there are no second chances and any mistake may be terminal, the evolutionary process is not only accelerated but also distorted. Because in the early stages luck plays as large a part as skill, the professionals know they are at a disadvantage, and only the amateurs, who have nothing to lose but their stakes, seem to enjoy themselves. All month, the World Series had been building to this grand climax, but now, when play resumed, the atmosphere was gloomy, the expressions were morose, the play was monotonous.

The professionals continued to fall: Johnny Moss, Junior Whited, Tony Salinas. Betty Carey was eliminated at eight-fifteen; Barbara Freer, a second top woman contender, a couple of hours later.

The previous day, I had talked to Barbara Freer, a very small middle-aged woman with a very large pompadour of dark hair, who has played in the big event since 1978. "When I sat down that first time, I'd never played hold 'em in my life," she told me. "But I figured as long as it was cards I'd learn as I went along. There were fifty-four entrants that year and, believe it or not, I finished eighteenth." She has bright eyes and the pugnacious confidence of a classy flyweight.

"I believe it," I said.

She nodded contentedly. "I prefer

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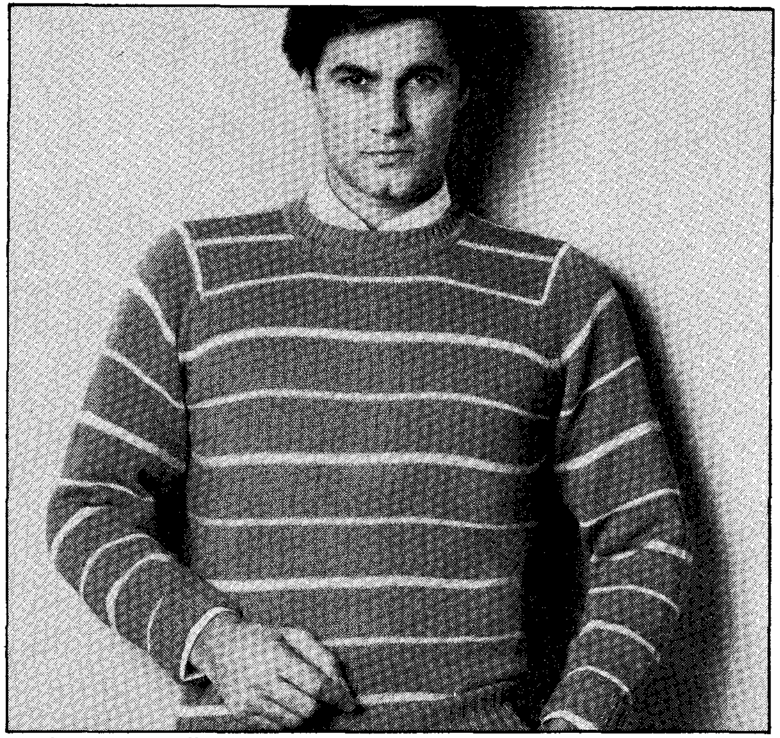

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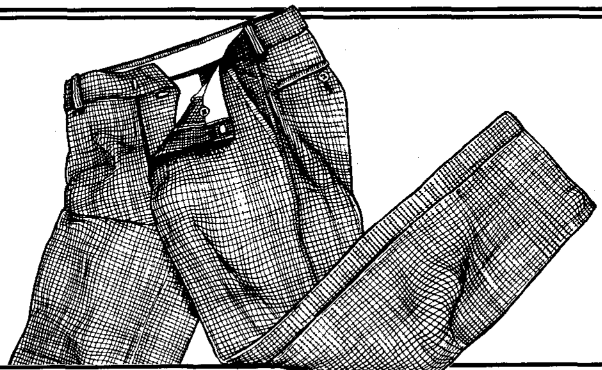

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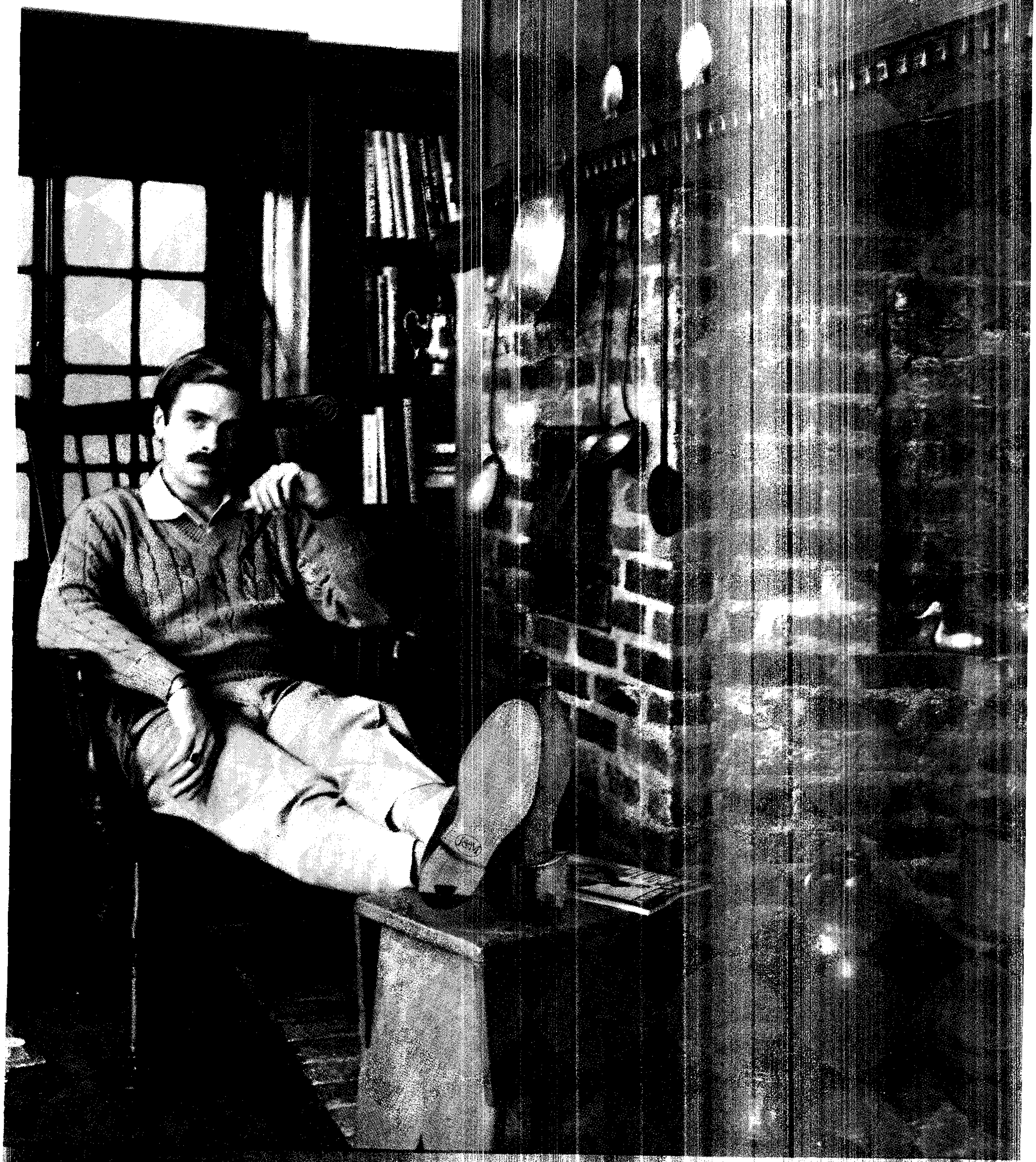

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playing with men," she said. "Women tend to be petty—if you beat them, they tell you you were lucky. With men, the aggression is straightforward, and I love it. Instead of frightening me, it goads me on. I have a great desire to win, and I love the competition. One of these days, I'm going to be up there in Binion's Hall of Fame with the other poker greats."

At ten-thirty the next evening—she was the last player to be eliminated on the first day—she shrugged dismissively when I asked her what had happened. "I had two pairs against his trips," she said. "But I had to be there. I'm a gambler, right?" Her voice was still jaunty, but the contagious confidence had leaked away and her large, painted mouth was unsteady. She looked like someone who has been dealt a mortal blow yet is still, in a confused way, ambulatory. It was a look I came to recognize as the big names were knocked out.

"What makes the heroic?" asked Nietzsche, and answered himself, "To go to meet simultaneously one's greatest sorrow and one's greatest hope." He also wrote, "Timid, ashamed, awkward, like a tiger whose leap has failed: this is how I have often seen you slink aside, you higher men. A throw you made had failed. But what of that, you dice-throwers! . . . If great things you attempted have turned out failures, does that mean you yourselves are—failures?" For the brief period in which the losers came to terms with the fact that their chances of becoming World Champion were over for another year, the answer was unequivocal. "Hell," said the crestfallen cowboy in the black shirt embroidered with black silk curlicues, "they beat me like an ugly stepchild."

All the next day, the mayhem continued: Jack Straus, Puggy Pearson, Amarillo Slim, a top amateur named Jesse Alto. Straus, in fact, was out within half an hour of the resumption of play. "There was twenty-eight thousand in the pot," he said. "I moved all in with my chips, turned over my cards, and told him I had him beat. Which was true. But he stayed in anyway and outdrew me on Fifth Street." (In hold 'em there are five communal cards dealt face up in the center. The first three are turned together and are called the flop. The next two are dealt separately, with a round of betting between each; they are called Fourth Street and Fifth Street.) His eyes were not quite focussed, and the expression on his face,

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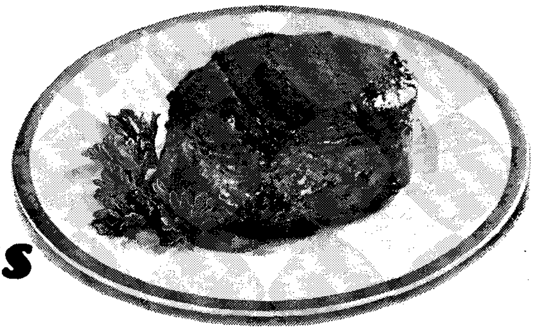

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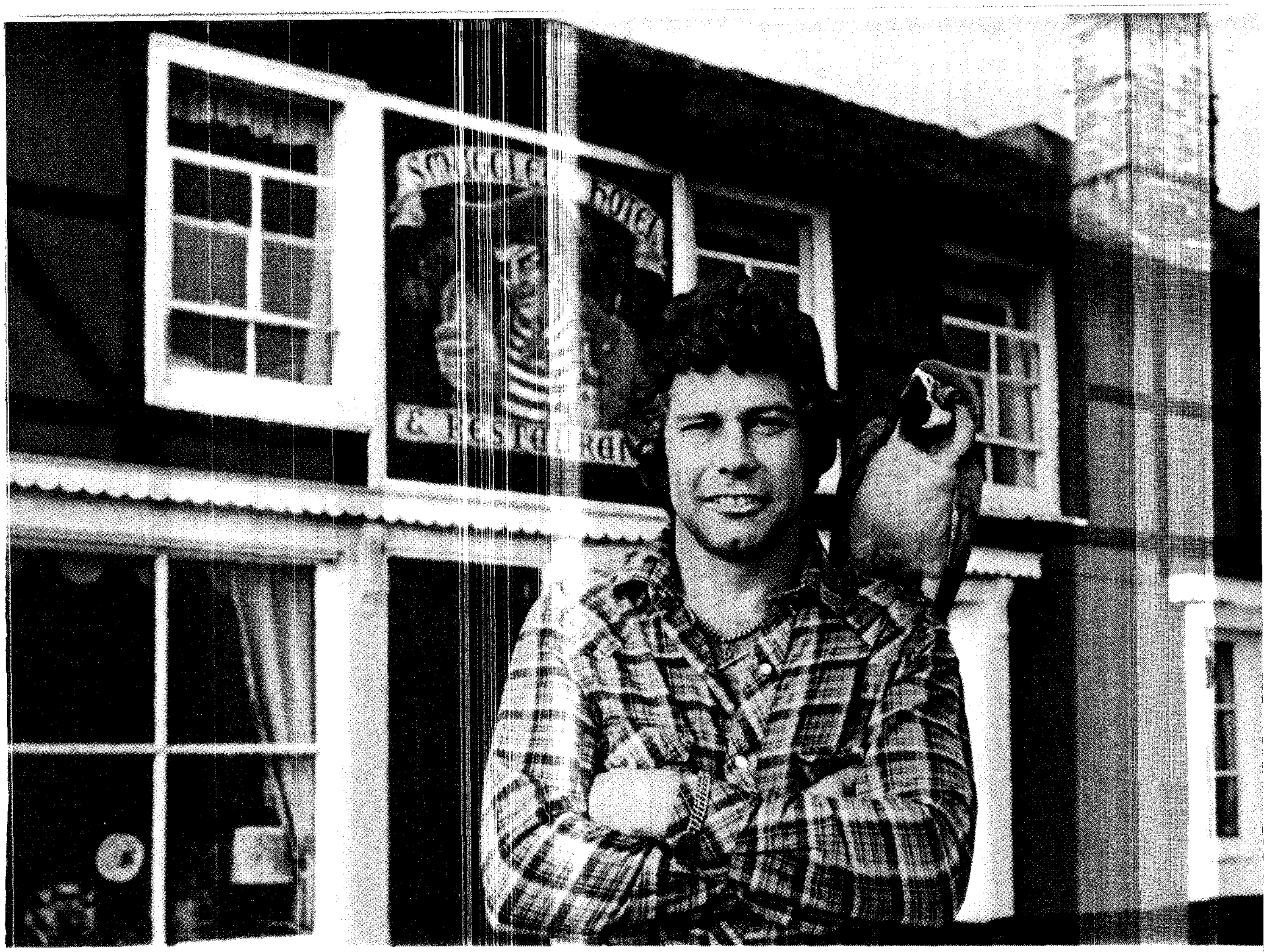

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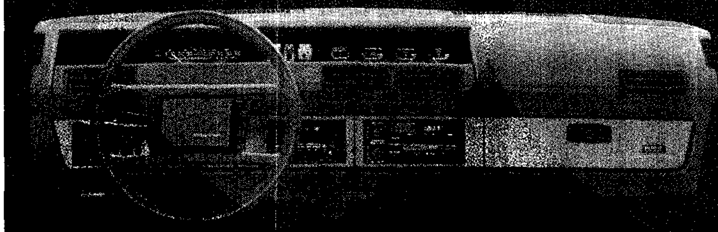

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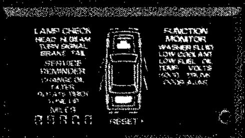

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like that of all the others who wandered into the Sombrero Room one by one, was stricken.

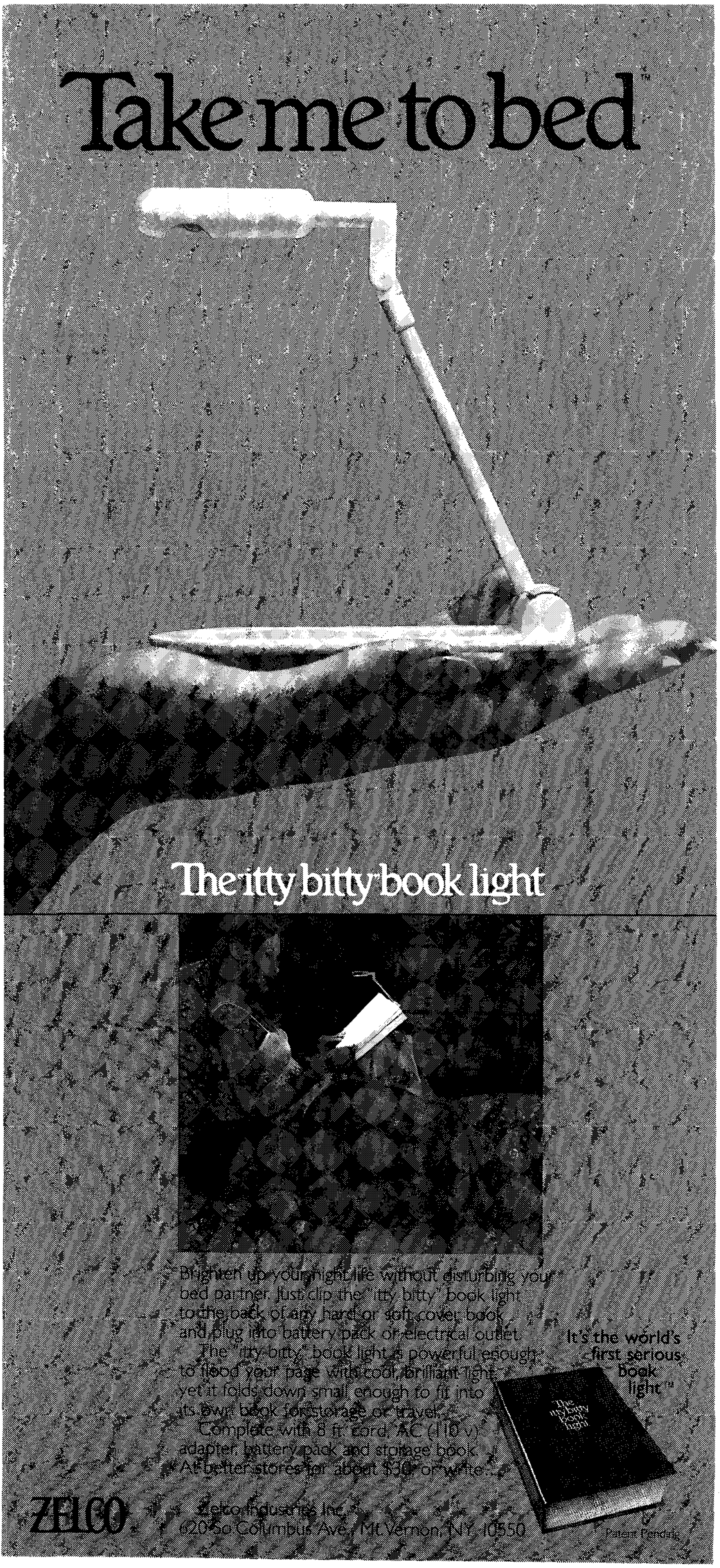
Only Johnny Moss allowed his anger to show through. He was standing near the reception desk, by a little trestle table on which were spread copies of his authorized biography, published by himself: "Champion of Champions: A Portrait of the Greatest Poker Player of Our Time." The price was fifteen dollars, and trade seemed to be brisk. Virgie Moss sat dourly behind the table, a cigar box full of money at her elbow. Moss jabbed a finger meaningfully at the title and reminded me that he had already won the high-low-split competition this year, despite his age. "But I ain't a-enterin' the champeenship next year. Nine-handed's too many. Seven-handed, like we played it in Texas, that's how it should be. Nine-handed you gotta sit there and wait for the nuts to break the suckers. I don' wanna play with suckers, I wanna play with gamblers. With gamblers, you play a fi-i-ine edge, not the nuts." He glared truculently down at his wife. "Ain't that right, baby?" he said.

Her leathery face creased in an indulgent, youthful smile. "Sure is, honeycakes."

The game droned on uneventfully through the second afternoon until around four o'clock, when a young player called Richard Clayton suddenly slumped sidewise and forward across the table, like a puppet whose strings have snapped. As the television cameras zoomed in, Eric Drache bustled up, hands raised as though in surrender. "O.K., O.K., no trouble," he said. "Just stomach cramps. It's happened before. Let's break for an early dinner."

An hour later, Richard Clayton was back in his seat, moving his chips around as if nothing had happened.

Not long before play ended for the day, when only twenty of the seventy-five starters were left, a big hand began to build between Chip Reese and a surly Texan, Bill Smith. Smith's face is pitted and blunt-featured, like Karl Malden's, and, almost alone among the serious poker players, he not only drinks while he plays but also seems drunk; he weaves a little in his seat, checking and raising in a thick voice. The cocktail waitresses keep the glass of whiskey at his elbow permanently freshened. But he is what Jack Binion calls a "plenty tough" player, dangerous and aggressive, and the other contestants treat him warily. This time,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however, when he came out betting, Reese raised him eight thousand dollars. Smith stared at him sullenly while the gamblers who were no longer playing crowded around the table.

"If Bill calls, ol' Chip's gonna have to swim in the lake," Johnny Moss murmured contentedly.

Smith sipped his whiskey thoughtfully, and then took four gray chips from a stack of twenty and pushed the rest in. He seemed utterly unconcerned, as though he were playing for pennies. The dealer cleared his throat, hitched back his shirt cuffs, burned the top card, and dealt the flop: a jack and a seven of diamonds, and a three of clubs. Reese considered the cards stonily and bet twenty thousand dollars. Without hesitating, Smith put both hands behind his stacks of chips and pushed them all into the center.

The dealer counted them and said, "Raise nineteen-three." A faint murmur came from the railbirds—a low, solemn sound, like keening.

Reese sat very still for a time, and then called the bet grimly, leaving himself with less than ten thousand dollars. There was now about seventy-five thousand dollars in the middle of the table.

With Smith all in, there could be no more betting, so both players turned over their hole cards: Reese had two jacks, giving him three of a kind with the communal jack exposed; Smith had an eight and ten of diamonds, giving him four cards to a flush and what is called a gut-shot draw to both a straight and a straight flush.

The dealer burned the top card and turned the king of spades, which helped neither player. Then he paused dramatically, like an actor who knows the audience is hanging on each gesture, burned another card, and turned over a five of diamonds. Smith had made his flush. Reaching forward unsteadily, he dragged the mountain of chips toward him while Reese watched, mouth drawn tight, eyes pained and astonished.

ON May 20th, the third day of the championship, the main features of the local papers were a running story about a duck with an arrow through its breast and the election for control of the local culinary union. The duck had been nimble enough to avoid its well-wishers for several days, although the arrow stuck out on each side of it like a clothes hanger. The new secretary of the culinary union,

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who had been elected on a reformist ticket despite alleged opposition from the mob, seemed likely to need a similarly charmed life. "No," he announced at his victory press conference. "I haven't received any death threats. Yet."

There were now twenty players left in the event, with three-quarters of a million dollars' worth of chips shared among them. The leader, with eighty-one thousand six hundred dollars, was Perry Green, a tiny, bearded dumpling of a man, who looks like a miniature Henry VIII but is in fact a fur trader from Anchorage and a devout Orthodox Jew. Chip Reese trailed the field, with seventy-eight hundred dollars. Doyle Brunson, in sixth place, with forty-seven thousand eight hundred dollars, seemed uneasy and depressed. "It's been uphill all the way so far," he said. "Just cain't seem to hit a card." He was suffering from a toothache and moved in an aura of myrrh.

The one cheerful face in the pervading gloom belonged to Andy Moore, the only surviving outsider in the tournament. Moore is forty and raffish-looking. He owns a bar in Sarasota, Florida, where he plays poker twice a week in a small social game, like thousands of others around the country: two-dollar ante, pot limit, win or lose two or three hundred dollars. "Mostly I lose," he told me. "My friend here"—a tall, ebullient man, who seemed as elated as Moore by Moore's success—"he just beats me like a drum." The tall friend laughed and slapped Moore's shoulder, then mine: all pals together. "I could play more often if I wanted," Moore continued. "But I've got all the other bad habits in life, too, so I just can't seem to find the time. I like girls and drinking and golf too much, I guess." The friend laughed knowingly and slapped him on the shoulder again.

In 1977, Moore moved out to Las Vegas to try the gambling life, but he left after three months with the money he had come with, having lost at poker and won at golf. "I love the excitement of gambling, but the coldness of this town leaves a lot to be desired," he said. "I've lived in Sarasota for twenty-five years—went to high school there—and although it's grown from maybe twenty-five thousand to fifty thousand in that time, it's still a fairly small town. It's warm, it's friendly, people know each other, the atmosphere is good. For me, Vegas is like a block of ice. Even if I won the

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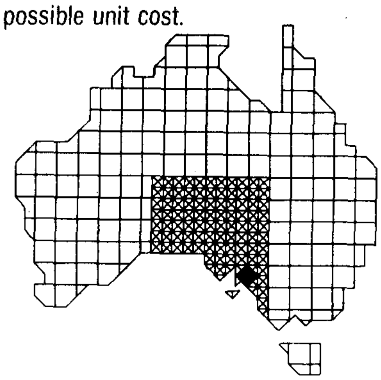

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championship, I wouldn't want to come back to this cold life again."

Meanwhile, he was living out a fairy story. The night before the championship, he and his friend had put up five hundred dollars each for him to play nine other players for the ten-thousand-dollar stake to enter the big event. He won, and by the end of the first day he had parlayed his winnings up to forty-five thousand dollars, which placed him third. Since then, his money had sunk considerably—to twelve thousand nine hundred dollars at the start of Day Three—but that only added to the excitement. "The point is, it's only cost me five hundred," he said. "It's not like I'm blowing ten thousand and trying to protect it. I'm here on a million-to-one shot, and if it hits, it hits."

Unlike the other players, Moore made no attempt to conceal his pleasure, and he wanted the whole world to share it. Each hand he played, he held the cards up for the railbirds to see. They loved him for that and because he was the underdog. Whenever he won, they applauded loudly, and he twisted around in his chair, beaming at them and shaking his head disbelievingly. When he lost, his loose mouth drooped and his back curved despondently. "Tough!" cried the railbirds, and "Keep after 'em, Andy!"

The gigantic Ken Smith, the chess master, was also playing to the crowd, not only doffing his top hat and bleating "What a player!" but also using the crowd as a sounding board whenever he decided to coffeehouse an opponent—bluff him orally. Early in the afternoon, he found himself head to head with a morose-looking man named Donald Furrh. As soon as Smith bet, Furrh's hands moved ominously to the back of his chips. Then they hovered while he considered whether or not to move all in.

"I've got a real hand here," Smith squeaked. "You gotta be strong, Don."

A large bleached blonde in cutoff Levi's and a halter shouted from the rail, "You tell him, Smitty!"

Ken Smith's voice rose another decibel. "It's a real good hand I'm holding here."

"Amen!" called the blonde.

Furrh stared contemptuously at Smith, shrugged, and threw in his cards. But the next deal, as though primed and goaded by Smith's performance, he moved all in with a jack and a nine when a jack fell on the flop. He

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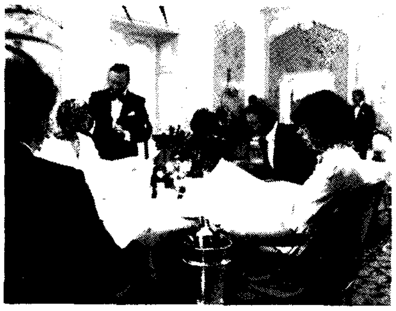

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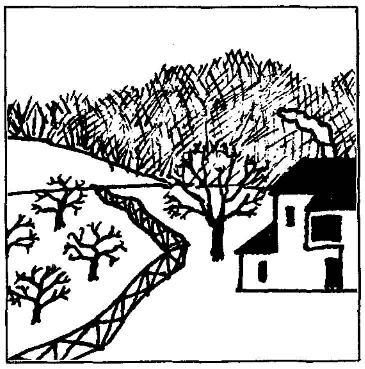

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had chosen the wrong moment and the wrong opponent: Jay Heimowitz, one of the few Easterners who can face the Texans as equals at hold 'em. Heimowitz called Furrh's bet without even pausing, and turned over his hole cards disdainfully: two jacks. Exit Furrh.

Minutes later, Ken Smith was at it again, his "What a player!" almost drowning out the din of the slot machines. Doyle Brunson, who has known Smith for thirty years, grinned at him benevolently. "You're all heart, Ken," he said. "Heart and belly." The railbirds applauded. "You know what I'm gonna do?" Brunson continued. "I'm gonna raise you on two rags and bluff you right out."

"Try me," piped Smith, and he came out betting when the next flop was dealt: king, queen, jack.

"Raise!" said Brunson so loudly that his jowls quivered. He put both hands behind his now depleted stacks of chips and pushed them belligerently into the center. Smith paused, shrugged, and docilely folded. Brunson pulled in the pot, then turned over his hole cards and tossed them, face up, across the table: a six and a five of different suits. He rose regally to his feet, doffed his Stetson, and cried, basso profundo, "What a player!" The crowd roared.

Although Brunson appeared to be enjoying himself, the cards were running steadily against him. He told me later that the only good hand he had been dealt in three days was a pair of kings, and those he had thrown away when Gene Fisher—Kit Carson revisited—reraised him with what Brunson assumed, correctly, to be three nines. "I never even had a draw to a straight or a flush," he said. "Every time I won a pot, it was with the worst hand." It is an indication of his supreme skill that, despite this, he came in eleventh out of seventy-five players. But little by little his chips were whittled away, and in the middle of the third day he and Andy Moore, each now desperately short of chips, both went all in before the flop. Moore held an ace and four of spades, Brunson a king and two of diamonds. The flop helped neither of them, but an ace fell on Fourth Street, and that was the end of Brunson's tournament. The crowd applauded him vigorously, and he replied with an expansive wave of his arm, like visiting royalty. But his eyes were vague, and his mobile face seemed battered.

A couple of hours earlier, the poker

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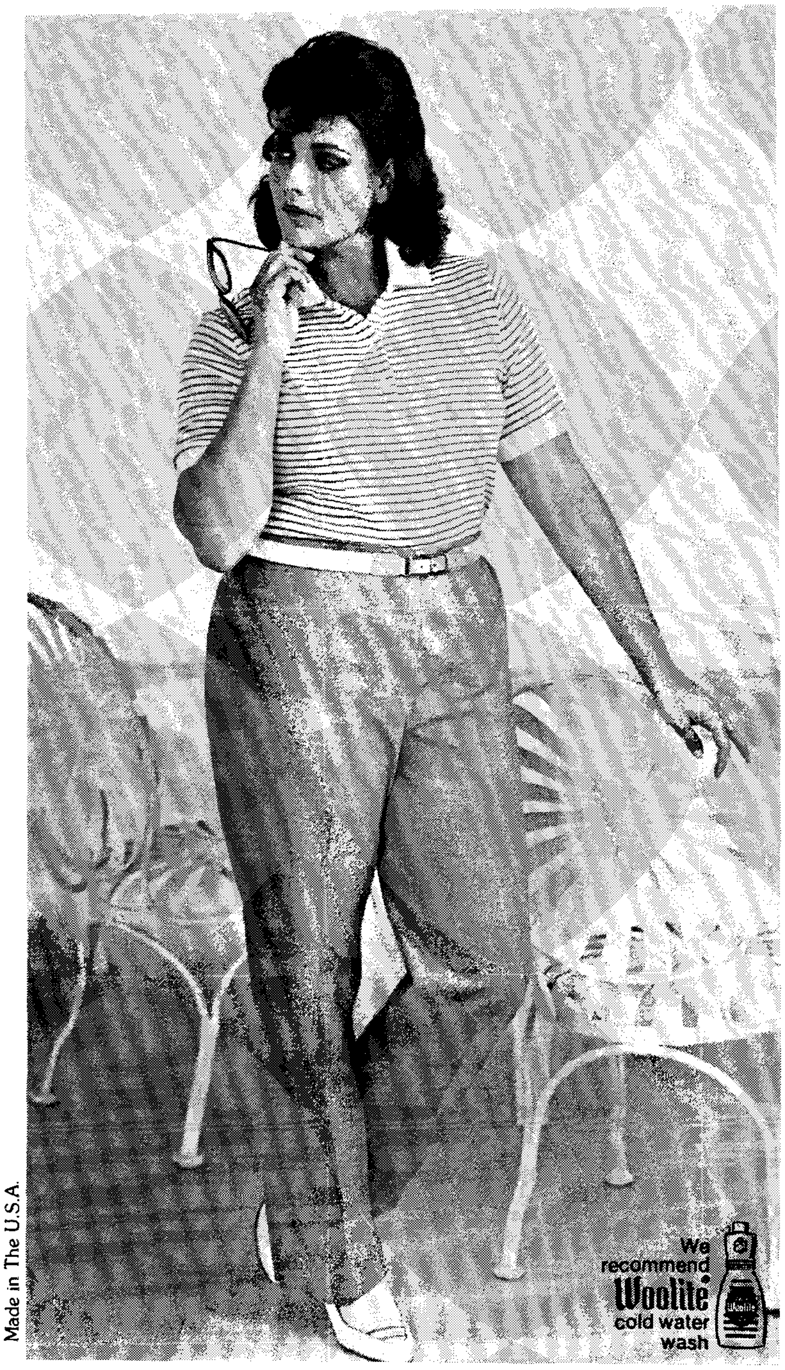
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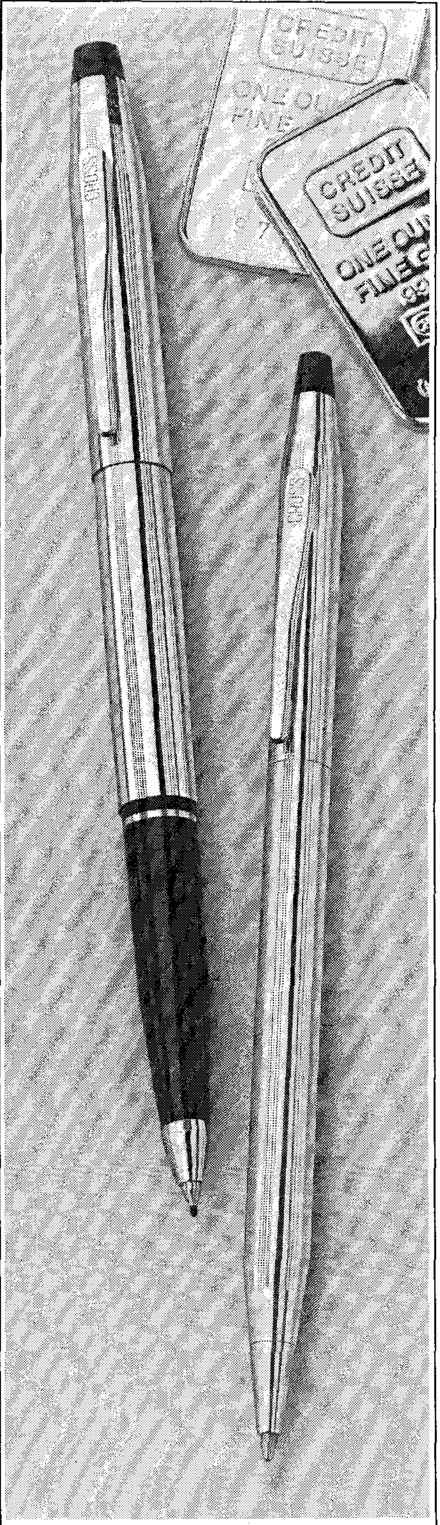
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players had briefly lost their poker faces when there were still fifteen of them left and Eric Drache announced that the three remaining tables would be amalgamated into two. The seats would be allocated, Drache said, by drawing cards: red for Table One, black for Table Two, one to eight of each color for the seat numbers. Frank Cutrona shuffled and dealt while Drache called out the players' names. Suddenly everybody began protesting at once: the first four cards dealt were all red. Someone shouted "It's a fix!" and the rest chimed in, demanding a new deal. Patiently, Cutrona gathered in the cards, shuffled, and dealt again: ace, two, three of clubs.

"Ain't possible!" cried Stu Ungar. "It's five thousand to one against!"

"I don't care if it's five million to one," Cutrona replied. "That's how the cards came and that's how the seating stays."

"Right," said Drache.

"Right," said Jack Binion, the final authority.

The players moved reluctantly to their new places, muttering to one another darkly. Their problem was not cards but superstition: even the losers were obscurely afraid of what a new seat at a new table might do to them.

Soon after the change, two retired farmers were eliminated: Sam Moon, an elderly stick of a man from Corpus Christi, who raises tomatoes and plays regularly in all the tournaments, and Milton Butts, whose sister and brother-in-law sat behind him all day long, living each hand with him. Butts, who is from Cleveland, Texas, wore a cheap blue nylon shirt, a baseball cap, and thick glasses. He has very large hands and no teeth, and he looked, like Moon, as if he would have been more at home in "The Grapes of Wrath" than in a high-stakes poker game. When Butts lost his last chips, his sister hugged him and wept.

Of the three New Yorkers left, Mickey Appleman went first, rising blank-faced from the table, seemingly unable to speak: Harpo Marx playing King Lear. He disappeared into his bedroom and did not emerge for several hours. Jay Heimowitz, however, was playing with ominous authority, as if he had decided that this, finally, was his year. In comparison, Stu Ungar, the wonder boy who had been the surprise winner the previous year, was living by his wits, ducking and weaving and counterpunching but avoiding any big confrontation.

Bill Smith, who continued to con-

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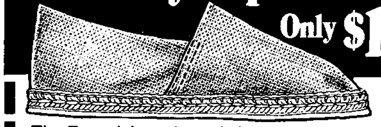

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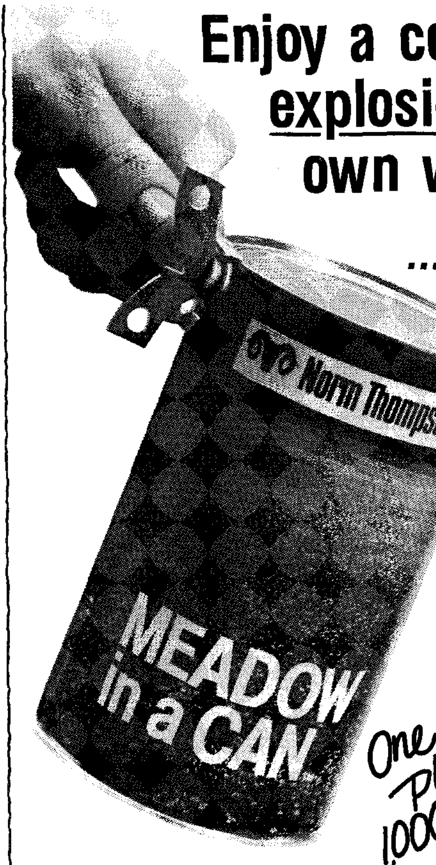
found all the rules by drinking and winning, lost thirty-seven thousand dollars to a tough-looking professional named Sam Petrillo, then came out raising on the very next hand, which he won. Soon after that, Stu Ungar moved all in against him with two aces in the hole and a full house on the flop. Again, Smith lost heavily, but still his aggression did not waver. By the end of the day, he seemed very drunk yet was still in sixth place. "If Bill ends up beating all the nice guys, like Bobby Baldwin, it's going to set the image of poker back ten years," one of the professionals muttered.

That evening, gold bracelets were distributed to those who had already won the other events, and Bill Boyd was formally inducted into the Poker Hall of Fame, alongside Edmond Hoyle, Wild Bill Hickok (shot holding two pairs, aces and eights, thereafter known as Dead Man's Hand), Sid Wyman, Nick the Greek Dandolos, Red Winn, Blondie Forbes, and Johnny Moss. Bill Boyd is a sober-suited, gentle old man who looks like a family doctor and was the manager of the card room at the Golden Nugget. He is also the undefeated champion at five-card stud—so good that eventually no one would play against him, and the event lapsed from the World Series.

When all the prizes had been given and the formalities were done, Benny Binion, who founded the Horseshoe, in 1947, finally spoke. To thunderous applause, he ambled up to the microphone, beamed vaguely around the packed room, and drawled, "I hope you all get out of here a winner." End of speech. More thunderous applause.

HALF an hour before play ended on the third night, Andy Moore, everyone's favorite underdog, raised unwisely with a pair of aces and a pair of queens and was trapped by Gene Fisher, the impassive Texan, who had made a straight on the flop. That mistake cost Moore twenty thousand dollars and also his equilibrium; he lost two more pots immediately afterward, both by narrow margins, and ended the day trailing the field, with twenty-seven thousand dollars. When play began on the last day, his eyes were puffy and he still seemed upset. "It was a hand I didn't have to play," he said to me. "I kept cussing myself for it all night."

Even so, I said, out of seventy-five starters he had made it to the last nine, and, whatever happened now, he



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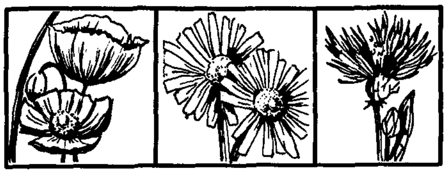
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would walk away with at least fifteen thousand dollars in prize money.

"And it only cost you five hundred bucks," said his tall friend cheerfully. But Moore was not to be consoled.

Chicago Sam Petrillo was the first to fall. Petrillo is a local of ten years' standing, a hard, sullen man with thick lips and a thin cigar. He gets his nickname from the town where he left an ex-wife and three children in order to become a professional poker player. In Vegas, he started out dealing blackjack but now plays poker twelve hours a day six days a week. Twenty minutes after play began, he moved all in with an ace and a king in the hole and was called by Bobby Baldwin, who was holding two queens. The queens were good, and Baldwin won a pot of a hundred and fifty thousand dollars, bringing his total as leader to two hundred thousand.

Six minutes later, Baldwin was dealt the queens again, and this time his victim was Andy Moore. Moore pocketed his prize money and grinned at the crowd for the last time. All he said was "I'd have liked to have lasted longer."

Often in poker games, certain hands keep recurring and seem unbeatable. Doyle Brunson, for example, twice won the World Championship holding a ten and a deuce—a hand that in an ordinary game would be virtually unplayable. But both times Brunson was forced to see the flop, despite his better judgment, because the antes in the closing stages of the tournament were so high—four thousand dollars from each player and a blind opening bet of eight thousand dollars—that he was partly committed before any other cards were turned. On both occasions, the communal cards gave him a full house of three tens and two deuces. This year, it seemed as if two queens might be the magic hand. Fifty minutes after Baldwin disposed of Andy Moore with them, he found himself head to head with Perry Green, but this time it was Green who was holding the pair of queens. Baldwin had two nines in the hole, and a third nine was turned on the flop. When Green bet forty-two thousand dollars, Baldwin, lips pursed, raised eighty-five thousand, to set Green in for all his money. Green sat immobile, scarcely breathing, like a tubby Buddha. He had kicked his shoes off when he first sat down, and his sock feet were pressed neatly together; his round belly was creased by the table; his plump arms encircled his stacks of chips; his

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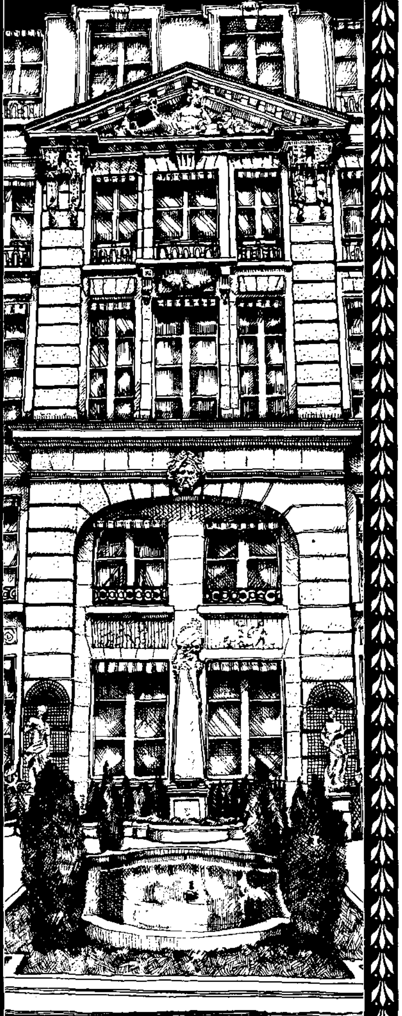

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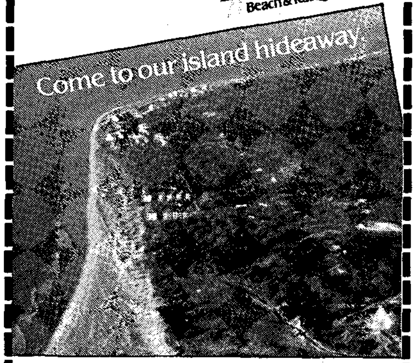

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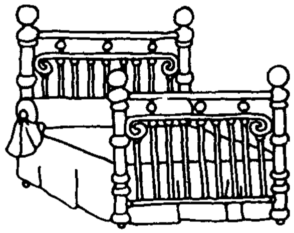

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hands were crossed demurely over his cards. He stared at Baldwin for two full minutes, then pushed the rest of his chips into the center. The dealer turned a jack, then a third queen, to match Green's pair. The crowd sighed in unison. Someone shouted, "Hang in there, Bobby!" As the dealer pushed the two-hundred-and-twenty-thousand-dollar mountain toward Green, Baldwin tried to smile, but the muscles around his mouth seemed unable to cope with the effort.

An hour before, Baldwin had seemed set to win his second title, but now the stricken look was on his face, and he began to push his luck in a desperate attempt to recoup. But at this level the players are alert to every nuance. They knew that Baldwin winning was different from Baldwin wounded, and they moved in for the kill. Three times, he tried to bluff, and each time he was called, the last time for a huge sum by Stu Ungar, who had made the fatal two queens on the flop. Fifteen minutes later, Baldwin was dealt two kings and moved all in against Gene Fisher. But Fisher had the magic two queens in the hole, and once again the third queen was turned, this time on Fifth Street. Now Baldwin did manage a smile as he made his way out through the applauding crowd. His wife followed him, touching his back reassuringly with her fingertips.

While Baldwin was playing, the outcome of the championship had seemed almost certain. His departure threw the whole event off balance. Of the six players now left, only Ungar had won the title before, but he was so young that the railbirds still considered his defeat of Brunson the previous year a lucky fluke.

"It's up for grabs," said a wizened old man in a Hawaiian shirt. "First come, first served."

"Keep it in Texas!" called a tall cowboy crushed in behind him.

Ken Smith raised his topper in acknowledgment. And for a period the contest seemed to become a question more of places than of personalities, hold 'em being, by tradition, a Texas game. Brunson, in fact, had made a large patriotic bet with Gabe Kaplan that the Texans would beat the Jews. Now the forces were equally matched: Ken Smith, Gene Fisher, and Bill Smith against Stu Ungar, Perry Green, and Jay Heimowitz.

At the start of the day, Heimowitz had been in third place, with a hundred and three thousand dollars, but

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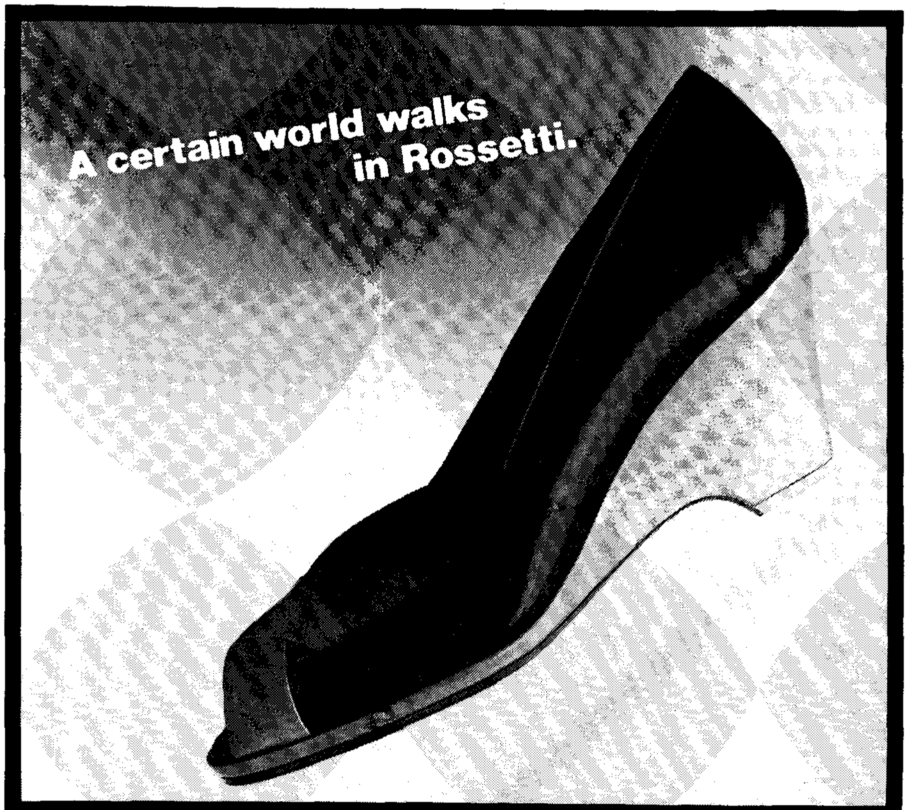

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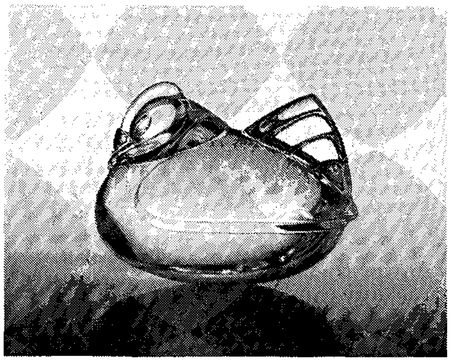

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now he was down to less than fifty thousand. He is a tall, rangy businessman from Monticello, New York, with a powerful nose and chin and with the build and temperament of an athlete. That morning, he had been up at six, had run a couple of miles while the air was still cool, and had done "a few hundred" leg lifts and other exercises; then he had gone back to bed until it was time to play. At each meal break, he disappeared into his room to shower and shave. "Feeling good and trying to look good can make you play better," he said. During the game, he moved about quite a bit, standing, stretching, pacing around the table, although the impression he created was not one of restlessness but one of intense energy carefully restrained. Of all the players, he seems the most obviously dedicated, the most powerfully driven by the need to excel. "Desire," he said. "That's what distinguishes the top players from the rest—the strong competitive will to win. A lot of people can play well for short periods, but after a couple of hours and one bad beat their game blows up. You have to be able to sit there and strive for hour after hour. You must accept a bad turn of the cards, or no cards, or being outdrawn unjustly, and you must overcome all that mentally. You don't have to be the best player to win, but you can beat the best by will power, by doing continually to the very limit of your ability what you're supposed to do. Poker is like everything else in this life: almost any goal is attainable, and the only time you fail is when you give up."

But on this final day will power and discipline were not enough to overcome the huge antes and a series of second-best hands. Finally, at four thirty, Heimowitz was dealt the miracle two queens. He bet heavily and was called only by Ungar. The flop was king, jack, ten of different suits, giving him an open-ended straight to go with his pair of queens. Although it was a powerful hand, he thought a long time before calling when Ungar made a bet large enough to set him in for all his remaining chips. Since there could be no more betting, Heimowitz turned over his queens. Ungar paused, grinned, twitched, and flipped over his hole cards: two jacks, giving him, with the flop, a set of three. Heimowitz got up abruptly, clasped his hands, flexed his shoulders in some obscure isometric ritual, and gripped the back of his chair fiercely, as though about to perform a feat of strength. His face was

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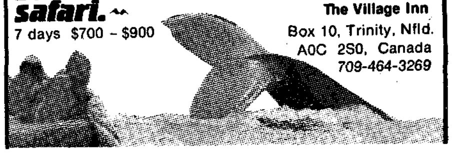

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solemn. The room was silent, except for the permanent whir of the air-conditioning. The dealer burned the top card and turned over a seven, burned another card and turned over the fourth jack. For the first time that day, the queens had failed to perform their magic. Heimowitz left looking grim, despite his prize money—thirty thousand dollars.

The very next hand, Ungar broke Bill Smith when he flopped a flush against Smith's pair of sixes and straight draw. Smith finished his drink, pocketed thirty-seven thousand five hundred dollars in crisp hundred-dollar bills, and weaved his way out. The crowd applauded him loudly but with a certain sense of relief. The new, clean-living image of poker had been spared for another year.

WHEN the game broke for early dinner, at five, only four players were left. Stu Ungar, who two hours before had been trailing the field with fifty thousand dollars, was the clear leader, with three hundred and forty thousand; Perry Green was second, with two hundred and twenty thousand; the two Texans, Gene Fisher and Ken Smith, had ninety-five thousand each. Brunson shook his jowls. "That bet of mine with Gabe don't look too healthy," he said.

It looked even less healthy a couple of hours later, when Perry Green eliminated Ken Smith with four aces against a top-straight draw. Smith lumbered to his feet and raised his topper when Jack Binion handed him his prize money. Someone in the crowd shouted "What a player!" Smith doffed his hat again.

At that point, Green seemed impregnable. He sat neatly at the table, gathered into himself behind a four-hundred-thousand-dollar mountain, like a man at absolute zero, every molecule of his body unmoving. Perched on his head was a white peaked cap emblazoned with the Horseshoe's insignia. His eyes, under its shadow, were unblinking. In comparison, Stu Ungar looked as if he had been broken and thrown carelessly into his chair—as vulnerable and helpless as an ungainly fledgling fallen from its nest. He squirmed about, arms unstrung, head peering this way and that, simian jaw and thin fingers working restlessly.

When Ungar won the World Championship at his first attempt, in 1980, beating Doyle Brunson in the final against every prediction, he had

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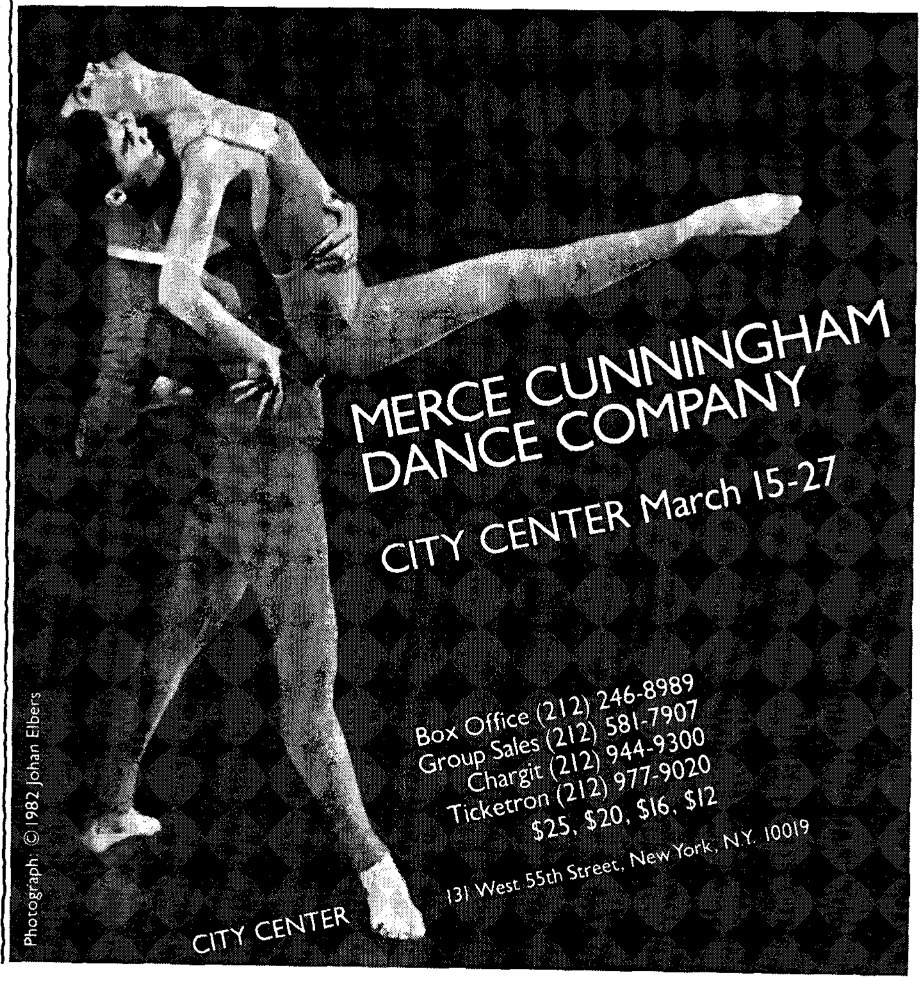

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been playing hold 'em for only a few months. He was twenty-six at the time, and had come to Las Vegas from New York with the reputation of being the world's best gin-rummy player—so good that he could no longer find anyone willing to play him, even in the Borscht Belt, where he had been beating all comers since he was twelve years old. His father was a bookmaker, and young Stu grew up in the cardplaying, gambling environment known as "New York goulash." When Eric Drache ran his own poker game in New York, Ungar used to play in it with considerable success, although he was only fifteen. Drache used to call him, fondly, "the idiot savant." His I.Q. is rumored to be a hundred and eighty-five, but he seems to have used it only to play cards and calculate odds. According to Drache, Ungar hadn't had a bank account until he came out to Las Vegas, and when he was finally persuaded to open one he thought he had to go to the bank each time he wrote a check. "Yet he is unbelievably sharp, wholly conscious of everything that's going on," said Drache. "I'd hate to try to cheat on him with his wife—if he had a wife. He'd know instantly." He also has, it is universally agreed, an unlimited natural talent for cards. His poker record in Vegas is said to be even better than Chip Reese's: a couple of million, probably more, in less than two years, I was told—"although it's hard to clock him, because he's in and out of the money all the time, winning it at cards, throwing it away again on the sports or craps or any proposition that catches his fancy." Jack Straus calls him, *admiringly*, the Kamikaze Kid. Drache puts it more primly. "He has some very bad habits," he says. But apparently Vegas, for once, is not to blame for them; it is rumored that when his father died, long before young Stu came out to Nevada, he blew his whole legacy—ninety thousand dollars—in two weeks at the race track.

Yet, despite his natural gifts, when the tournament began the bookmakers gave Ungar only a forty-to-one chance of winning the championship for the second time, and he agreed with them: he bet heavily on Brunson, not at all on himself.

Even when it came down to the last three, he seemed unlikely to win, although Gene Fisher, still looking like the noble frontiersman, with his bright-blue eyes, his drooping mustache, and his silver hair curling under

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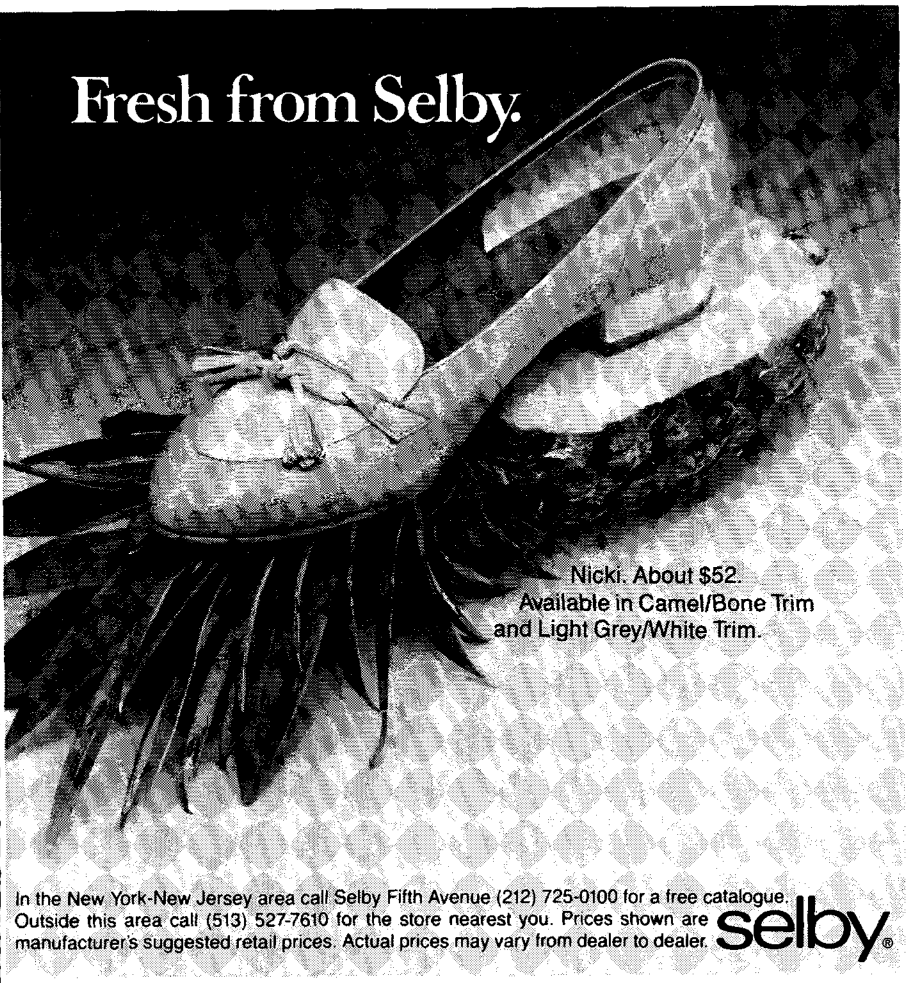
the rim of his battered Stetson, was now too low on chips to be a threat. In contrast, the immobile Perry Green seemed as unforgiving as a rock wall. Johnny Moss, however, was not impressed. "I reckon Stuey's got it made," he said. "He may not look like no Buffalo Bill, but he's one tough poker player. That boy's got alligator blood in his veins." For Moss, there is no greater compliment he can pay a fellow-gambler.

Twenty minutes after Bill Smith was broken, a big pot began to build between Green and Ungar. Green, holding an ace of spades and a queen of diamonds, bet modestly, and called when Ungar, with a pair of kings in the hole, raised ten thousand dollars. The cameramen closed in as the dealer turned the first three cards: an ace of clubs and a ten and five of diamonds. Ungar glanced at the cards disconsolately, slumped sidewise in his seat, and tapped the baize twice with his forefinger to check. Green stared at him and then at the three innocent cards. Only his eyeballs moved. Carefully, he separated several towers of chips from the bastion in front of him and pushed them toward the center. The dealer counted them expertly and said, "Sixty thousand." Ungar lolled over still farther in his seat, until he seemed in danger of falling on the floor. He knew that when Green bet so much—twice the amount in the pot—he was saying two things: first, that he himself had a good hand and wanted to win the pot right there, without further hassle; second, that he recognized that Ungar, too, held powerful cards—probably two big diamonds—and wanted to offer him the worst possible odds for making his hand. Ungar took a few chips from his stacks and began to dance them through his fingers, up and down, in and out, like a juggler. Then, quickly, as though not to give himself time to change his mind, he separated the sixty thousand from his now diminished pile and pushed them forward. The dealer gathered them in, counted them, burned the top card, and dealt the king of hearts, giving Ungar three kings. Ungar straightened in his chair, shook his head impatiently, as if in answer to some private question, put his hands casually behind his remaining chips, and pushed them into the center. There was silence while the dealer counted. "Ninety thousand," he said, at last. A voice from the crowd said, "Wow!" Silence fell again while Perry Green sat, seemingly intermina-



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bly, weighing Ungar's move. One minute, two minutes, three minutes. Finally, he separated nine stacks of twenty gray chips from the rest of his money and shoved them in. The dealer dealt a four of clubs, and the crowd erupted. Green blinked once and did not move. The pot was three hundred and thirty thousand dollars.

For the second time in the event, Ungar had moved into the lead, with four hundred thousand dollars to Green's three hundred thousand; Gene Fisher limped behind with fifty thousand. A quarter of an hour later, he was out, unluckily, when Perry Green made a flush on Fifth Street to beat his three kings. Fisher rose slowly, tilted his handsome head to the applauding crowd, and grinned like a schoolboy when Binion handed him the third prize—seventy-five thousand dollars.

Brunson, standing with Gabe Kaplan behind one of the television cameramen, fished his bankroll from his voluminous trousers and began counting out hundred-dollar bills. "So much for the Texans," said Kaplan. "We got ourselves an all-Jewish final."

The win against Fisher gave Green a hundred-thousand-dollar pot, putting him in the lead once more. There was now three-quarters of a million dollars' worth of chips on the table, shared between an Orthodox Jewish furrier from Alaska and a twenty-seven-year-old wonder boy from New York. Yet such is the nature of freeze-out poker that the money would have no meaning until the last pot was won. The chips were like rapiers in a fencing match—instruments to attack, parry, counterthrust until one or the other of the duellists delivered the coup de grâce. It was the final, purest expression of the high rollers' attitude toward money, the language of poker, with which they can express every subtle nuance of meaning but that otherwise has no significance until the game is over.

After the departure of Gene Fisher, the antes were raised to four thousand dollars, the blind opening bet to eight thousand, forcing both the finalists to play on the slimmest of chances. Despite this, the game was subdued, almost static, for half an hour, as each of them probed for a weakness and withdrew quickly at the first sign of confrontation. Then, at eight-thirty, when Green was still comfortably ahead, a gigantic pot developed after a jack of diamonds and a nine and eight

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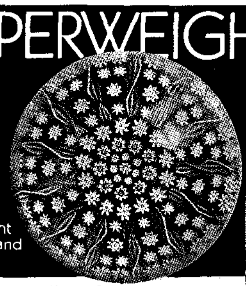

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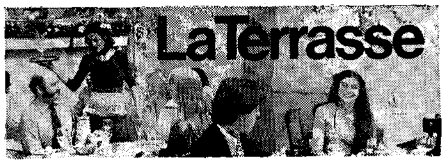

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of clubs were turned on the flop. Ungar, who was holding an ace and jack of clubs, moved all in with two jacks and four cards to the top club flush. Green, with a ten and deuce of clubs, saw the bet, giving him a draw to an open-ended straight and also a draw to what was in fact a weaker flush. The fourth card was a third jack, the fifth card a six of spades. The pot was worth five hundred and sixty thousand dollars, and it put Ungar firmly in the lead, with six hundred thousand to Green's hundred and fifty thousand.

At that point, Green's whole manner changed. Although he remained as impassive as ever, moving hardly at all, his face registering nothing, his aura of threat and imperturbability seemed to leak slowly away, as if through a very small puncture. It was as if the possibility of actually winning the championship had not been quite what he intended when he entered, and now that he had come so far the prospect was too much for him.

"It's all over," Straus said. "The kid's gonna eat him up like a boardinghouse pie."

But it was not until nine-forty-five, after another hour and a quarter of desultory, gloomy play, that the end came. Ungar, with the ace and queen of hearts in the hole, made a large bet before the flop; Green, holding a ten of clubs and a nine of diamonds, called it guardedly. The flop was a seven of diamonds and an eight and four of hearts, giving Ungar four hearts and Green an open-ended straight draw. When Ungar bet again, Green moved in with all his remaining chips. They sat as they had sat for hours, Green with his round belly pressed against the table and his plump hands folded neatly over his cards, Ungar lolling sidewise with his left arm flung back over his chair, and fractionally raising and lowering his cards with the bony fingers of his right hand. He paused a long time before calling the bet, and then both men turned over their cards. Green stared at Ungar's two hearts, nodded once, and shifted his eyes back to the communal cards in the center. Ungar's long mouth twitched, and he fidgeted uneasily in his chair. "For a while, it looked pretty dim out there," he said later.

The rustling, whirring calm that passes for silence in Binion's Horseshoe thickened, like the air before a thunderstorm. The dealer burned the top card and turned over the four of clubs, burned the next card and turned over the queen of diamonds. For the

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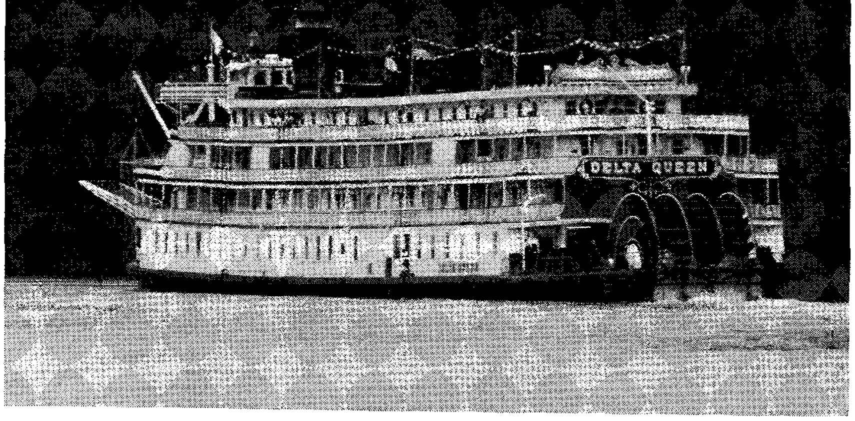

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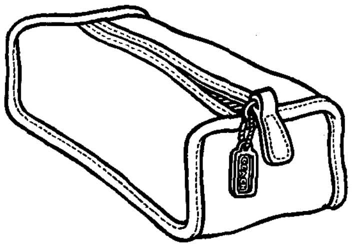

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last time in the tournament, the queens had worked their magic. Green had not filled his straight, and Ungar had won his second title with a pair of queens, a pair of fours, and an ace kicker. They had been head to head for one and three-quarters hours.

"Hey!" said Ungar, and jumped galvanically in his chair as the storm broke around him. The spectators were clapping and shouting their approval, the television cameras zoomed in and out—on Ungar, on Green, on the huge mounds of chips, and on the cards lying where they had been dealt. From the other end of the casino came a concerted rattle, as if the slot machines themselves were applauding. Grinning from jug ear to jug ear, Jack Binion bustled forward, followed by two security guards carrying bundles of money, which they heaped prodigally, like firewood, on the table. Binion clasped Ungar and Green to him, his arms around their shoulders, while a barrage of cameras flashed. Someone stuck a microphone in front of Ungar, but all he could manage was "Great!"

For the last time that year, Jack Binion divided up the prize money: three hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars to Stu Ungar, a hundred and fifty thousand to Perry Green, in packets of fifty hundred-dollar bills, ten packets to a bundle. The television cameras probed lovingly around it. The security guards watched them grimly.

AFTERWARD, there was a confused and largely inaudible press conference in the annex to the Sombrero Room. Someone asked Ungar how old he had been when he started gambling.

He ducked his head and muttered, "Seven or eight. Somethin' like that."

Someone else asked what he did in his spare time.

"Spare time?" Ungar cocked his head and eyed the journalist incredulously. "Only time I'm not gamblin' is when I'm sleepin' or eatin'." He seemed more restless than ever, shifting about continuously on the hard little chair he had been provided with, shaking his head, scratching himself vaguely.

The inevitable question came: What would he do with all that money?

Ungar ducked his head again, giggled, and muttered into his chest, "Lose it."

"Sorry," said the journalist. "I didn't catch that."

Ungar straightened out momen-

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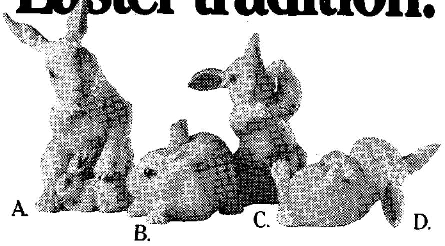

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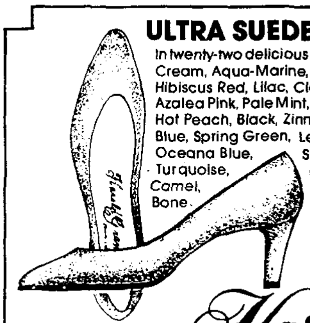

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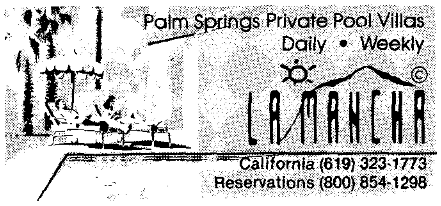

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tarily and grinned at the expectant faces. "I'm gonna put it in the bank and give it to my kids. What else?" He let out a brief, uncontrolled gasp of laughter, and the journalists laughed uneasily with him. The transparent skin, stretched corpse-tight across his face, was even paler than usual. He rubbed his eyes, his forehead, the back of his neck, and then stood up suddenly and scratched the small of his back. His grin had gone, and he seemed exhausted. "That's it, fellas," he said.

Perry Green was more ceremonious. He introduced his wife. "Come on over here, Gloria. The gentlemen of the press want to meet you. Now, here she is. Not bad-looking, is she, guys?" He reeled off the names of the staff at his Anchorage headquarters: "I have a wonderful brother who manages the store when I'm gone, along with Grace Black, who manages the store downstairs. And up in the factory I have all those wonderful people—Victor and Mary and Juan and the rest. Without their help, I couldn't come here." He launched into a breathless roll call of the "name celebrities" who had bought his furs: "The Reverend Oral Roberts and Ike and Tina Turner and the Four Freshmen and the Bee Gees and Sam Snead and the owner of the Pittsburgh Pirates . . ."

On the opening day of the tournament, Jack Binion had said to me, "When it's over, talk to the guy who came in second. He'll have just won a whole heap of money, but he'll be looking like he's lost everything." Perry Green, however, was bouncing like a rubber ball, as though making up for all those hours of blankness and immobility. "This year, I just accepted the President's award for the Union of Orthodox Congregations," he said. "My daughter's going to become a mother. I'm building a new house for my lovely wife and our five lovely kids. We're establishing an Orthodox synagogue up there in Alaska—the first one—and we want to be within walking distance. Yep, it's been a good year for me."

"And now you've won all this money."

"Yeah, well." His face fell; his tubby little body seemed to deflate. "I know I disappointed a lot of people," he said. "But I came close, didn't I?"

BY ten o'clock the following morning, the poker tables had been removed from the back of the Horseshoe, along with the banners, the

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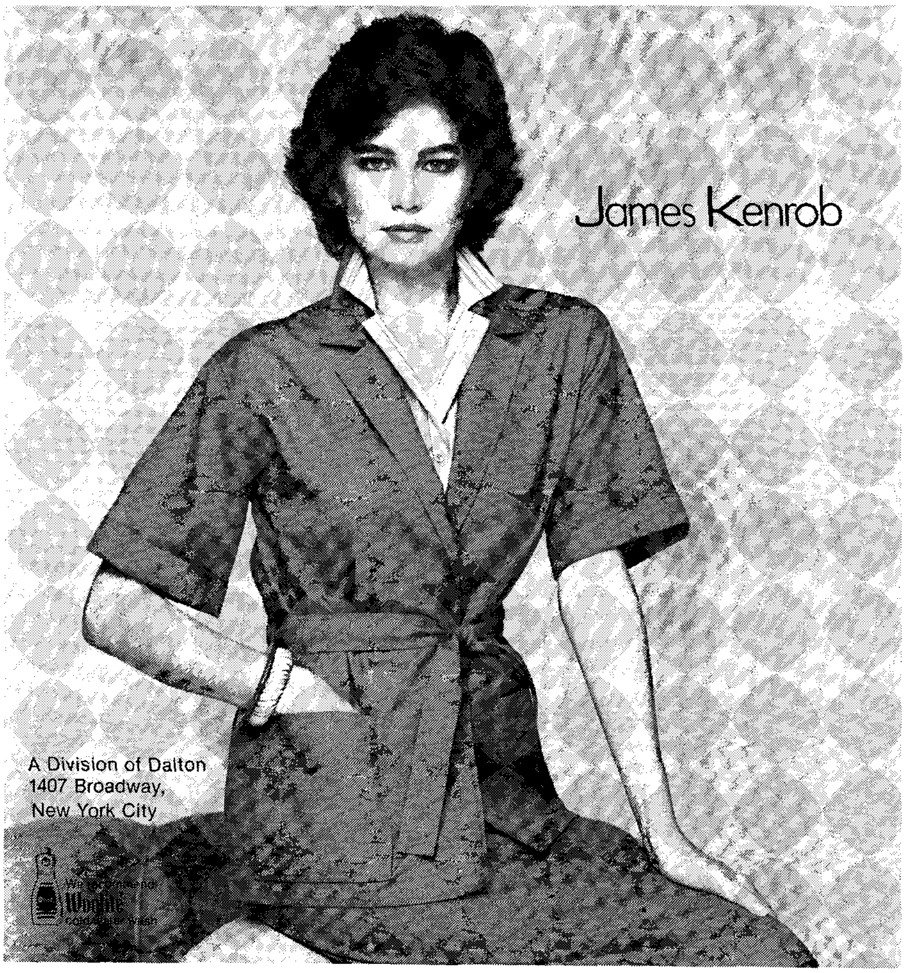

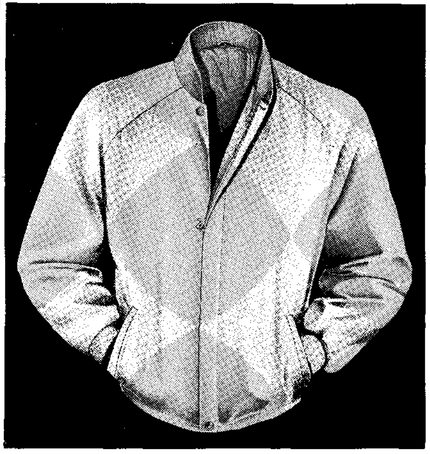

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blackboard, and the paraphernalia of the television crews. Workmen in gray dungarees were busy reinstalling the slot machines. The casino was crowded, as usual, with tourists—a sea of sweatshirts and halters, Stetsons and bleached perms. Someone had got hot at one of the craps tables, and the spectators were cheering him on, whooping like Apaches with each new winning roll.

Doyle Brunson was coming out of the Sombrero Room as I arrived. He was dressed in brown, like a Franciscan friar, stately and solemn. "Hell," he said. "I came in eleventh out of seventy-five, so I cain't say it was too disappointing." He patted me genially on the shoulder from his great height, as though in blessing. "But you know and I know that don't make a damn of difference," he went on. "Not to have been at that last table yesterday was the worst thing I can think of. I wasn't miserable, exactly. I just felt empty. All I wanted was to be in there playing." He shrugged, exhaled deeply, sucked in his lower lip, and smiled. "Of all the days of the year, yesterday was the worst. But there ain't nothing I can do now except try to forget it and wait till next year."

In the restaurant, Jack Straus, looking flushed and cheerful, was holding court. He and Betty Carey had been playing all night, and once again Carey was broke. The end had come when an eight, nine, and ten of spades were flopped, then the jack of spades was dealt on Fourth Street. Betty moved all in, and Jack saw her bet. Triumphantly, she turned over the seven of spades and hollered, "Straight flush!" Straus shook his head ruefully. "Wrong end, honey," he said, and turned over the queen of spades.

A journalist from New York was listening to Straus's account of the hand and shaking his head disapprovingly. "Tell me, Mr. Straus," he said primly. "Don't you ever feel sorry for the people you beat?"

Straus stretched comfortably. His left eyelid drooped, and he looked at the journalist's earnest face as though along the barrel of a gun. "Funny you should ask that," he said. He put his elbows on the table. His voice was low and intimate. "Just last month, back in El Paso, I played a housepainter and beat him out of his whole month's salary—twelve hundred and forty dollars—and I took him a hundred dollars on tab. When the game was over, he signed his paycheck over to me, and I drove him home to collect the

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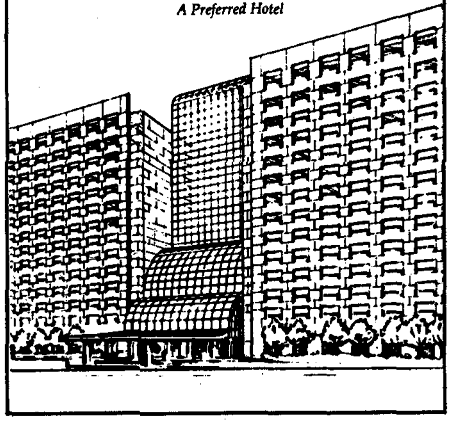

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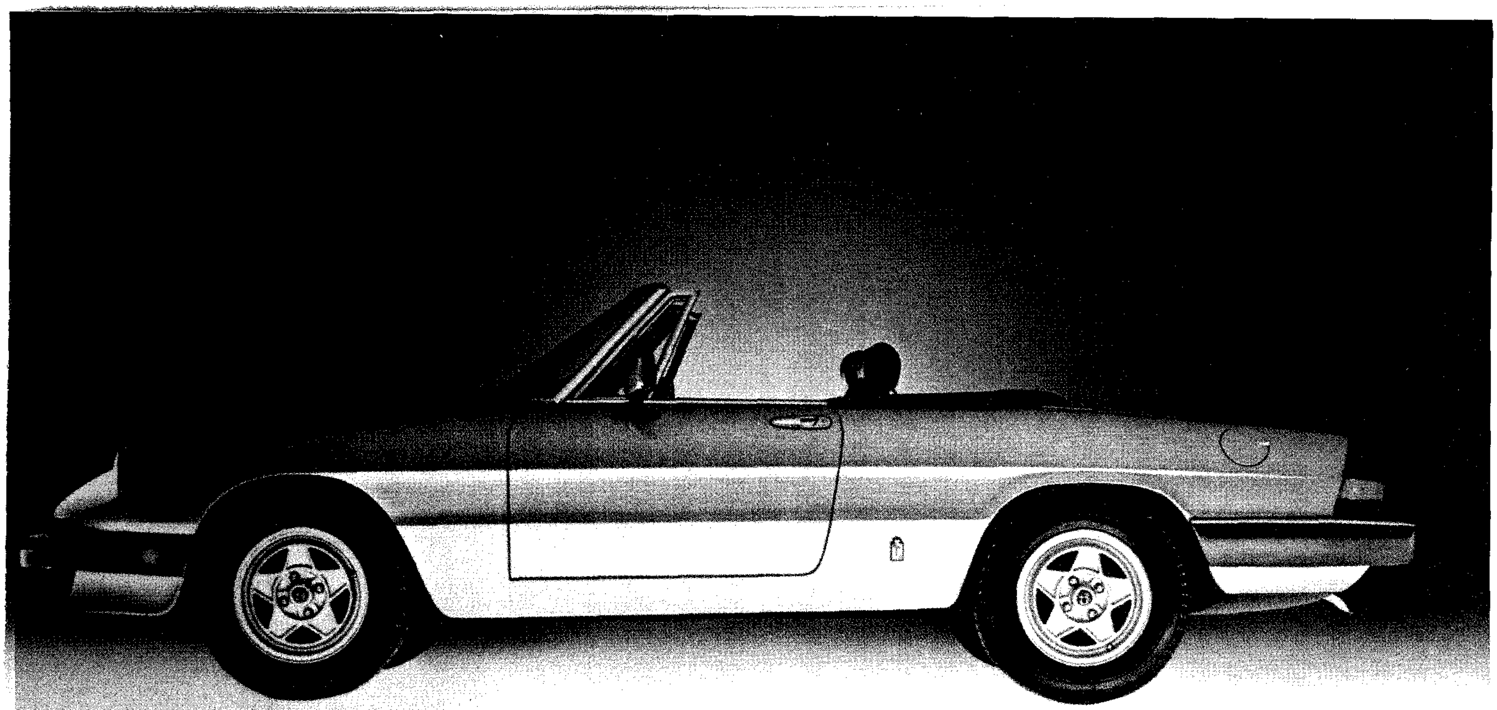

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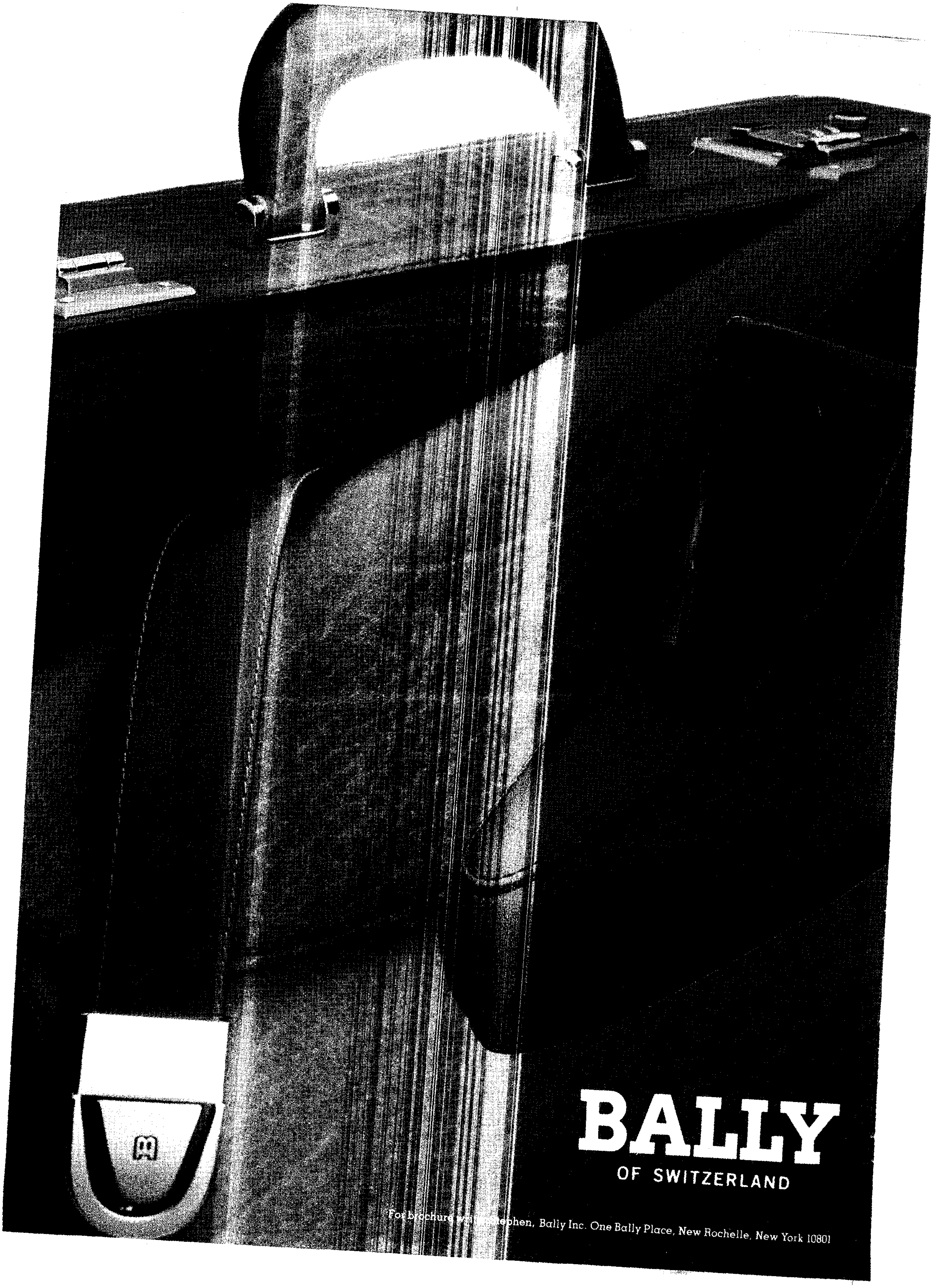
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rest. He lived in a lower-middle-class section of town, and when we got to his house his wife was there with their six children. 'Honey,' he said, 'I've got some bad news. I lost the paycheck playing poker.' 'Shush,' she said, and herded the children into the next room. Then she started to cry. 'How're we going to feed the kids next month?' she said. 'Honey,' he said, 'I haven't told you the worst part. I still owe this gentleman a hundred dollars.' Well, while they were talking I was looking around, and I noticed her purse lying open by the telephone. There was a ten-dollar bill in it and a one. So you know what I did?"

As Straus talked, he had gradually leaned forward across the table, until his face was inches from the journalist's. "No," said the journalist, eyes wide with concern. "What did you do?"

Straus's left eye drooped farther; his expression was grave. "I just took the ten-dollar bill," he said, "and let him slide for the rest."

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—A. ALVAREZ

(This is the second part of a two-part article.)

•

There are different tricks to catching crappie, but basically there are only two ways. Or maybe that should be one lure and one bait. After doing The Globe-Democrat fishing report almost every week for nearly 10 years, the vast majority of crappie are caught on either minnows or small jigs.—*Bill Seibel in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat.*

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•

You must use 1982-83 forms; forms from previous years cannot be processed and will be returned. Do not use a 1982-83 form for any test date after June 18, 1983, or after August 18, 1983.—*Bulletin from the Graduate Management Admission Council.*

Whichever comes first.

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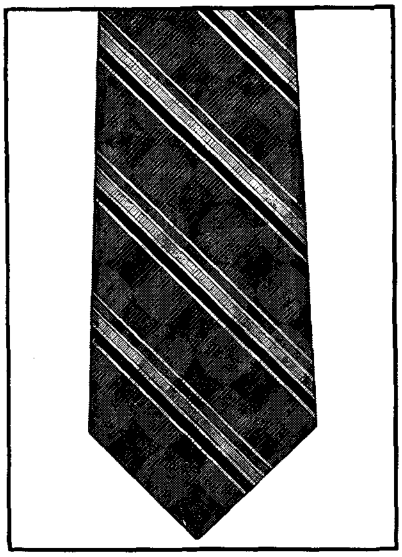

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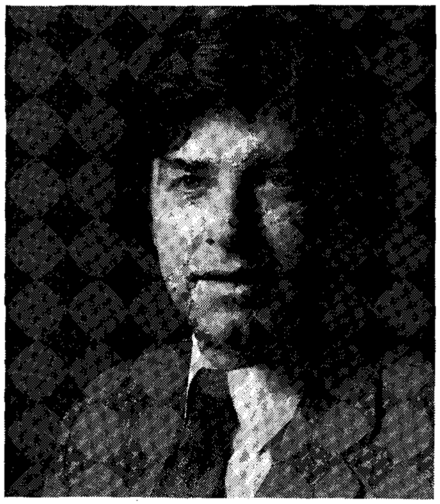

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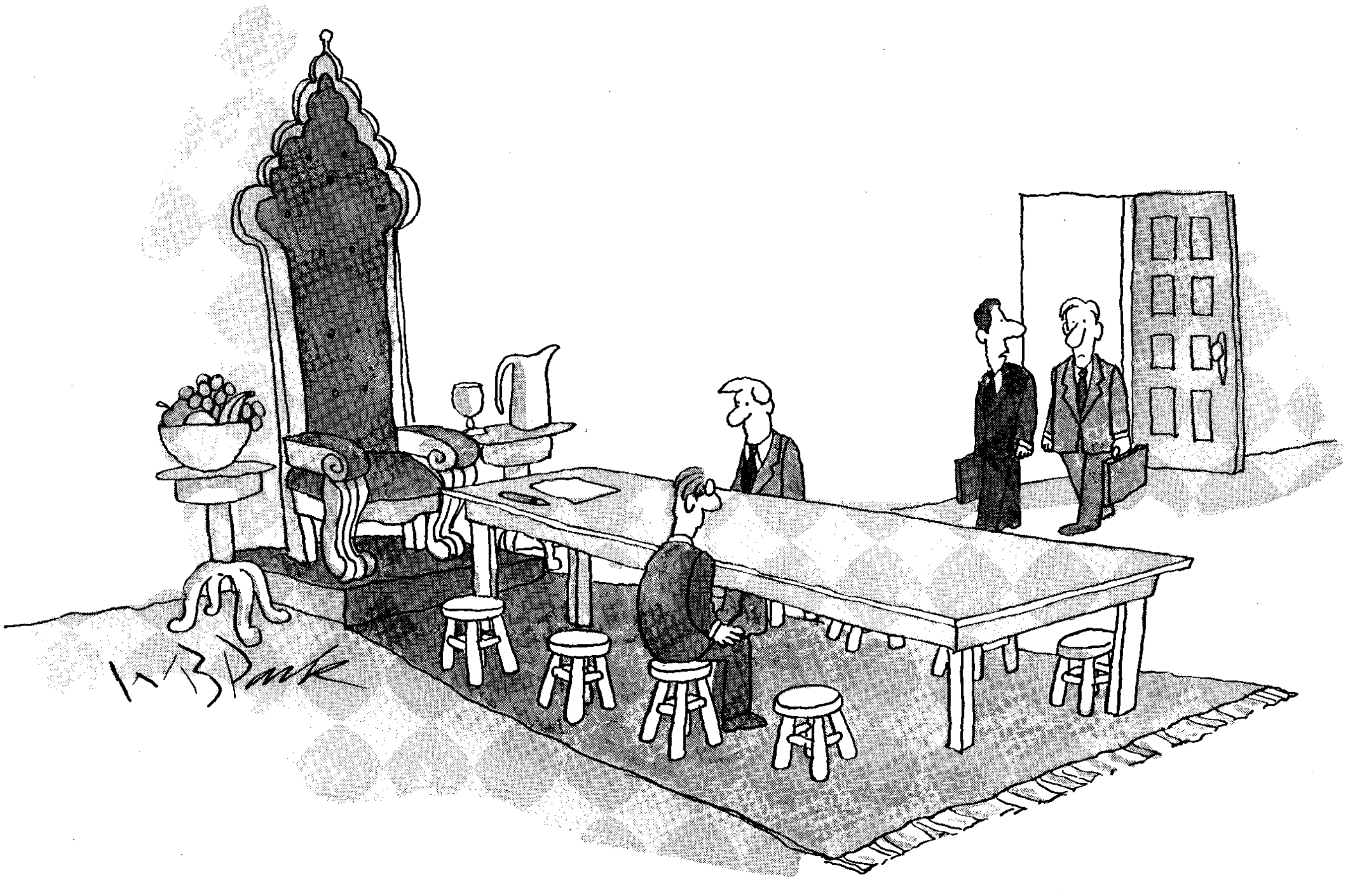
THE THEATRE

Outwitting Time

THE first thing to be said about "On Your Toes" (at the Virginia) is that it is being played as if it were a brand-new work, honorably ready to stand or fall on the strength of its ability to entertain us in contemporary terms. Not the least taint of patronizing archness infects the show; we are in the presence of the songs of Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart as they were intended to be played and sung and danced to, and we are happy to be in their presence. In the original production of 1936, the two big musical numbers—the "Princess Zenobia" ballet and the "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue" ballet—were choreographed by George Balanchine; they have been faithfully reproduced by Peter Martins. The other musical numbers have been choreographed for this occasion, with affection and sympathy, by Donald Saddler. The book, written by Rodgers, Hart, and George Abbott, has been somewhat cut down and spruced up by Mr. Abbott, who is also repeating, after forty-seven years, his duties as the over-all director of the show. (In its present form, the book contains a few sexual wisecracks and a few earthy phrases that the comparatively straitlaced audiences of the thirties—to say nothing of the straitlaced Mr. Abbott himself—might have found impermissible. At ninety-five, Mr. Abbott is not yet a pagan, but neither is he content to be the last puritan.)

"On Your Toes" must have been thought to be practicing a revolutionary boldness in permitting the success of the show to depend upon but two big numbers, both of unusual length and complexity. There are far fewer songs than audiences of any period expect to encounter in a musical; two or three—"Glad to Be Unhappy," "Too Good for the Average Man," and "Quiet Night"—have gained a certain measure of fame, but it is "There's a Small Hotel" that has long been one of the most popular standards of the century. Written for and then dropped from "Jumbo," the Rodgers and Hart musical that preceded "On Your Toes," "There's a Small Hotel" is furnished with lyrics that, like the lyrics of "Tea for Two," appear to owe more to the exigencies of the rhyme scheme than to common sense. Why on earth does that little hotel have a wishing well in it except for the reason that "well" makes such an admirable rhyme for "hotel"? No matter—the song is immortal, and I've no doubt that hundreds of small hotels throughout America boast wishing wells because of it.

The cast has been well chosen. Natalia Makarova plays Vera Varonova, the role originated by Tamara Geva (who was in the audience on opening night, looking ready to leap onstage at a moment's notice), and Lara Teeter plays Junior Dolan, the role originated by Ray Bolger. The newcomers prove worthy of their predecessors; Miss Makarova is a clever comedienne, and Mr. Teeter, in the "Slaughter" ballet, convincingly depicts the horror felt by a dancer approaching the end of a number that will also, he has learned, serve as the cue for his death. George S. Irving, as the Russian impresario Sergei Alexandrovitch, and Dina Merrill, as his wealthy benefactress, have a couple of amusing scenes together; Christine Andreas makes a suitably plucky All-American sweetheart for Junior; and George de la Peña is as nearly Iago-like as the circumstances require him to be. The sensationally attractive settings are by Zack Brown, who also provided the



"At least we always know who's in charge around here."

costumes, and the lighting is by John McLain. The first production of "On Your Toes" ran for ten months; the present production deserves to equal or surpass that run.

THE time of "Slab Boys" (at the Playhouse) is 1957, and the place is a town in Scotland; during the play one feels as remote from New York City in the eighties as if the scene were Glamis and the three witches were still busily stirring up their *cuisine minceur* broth of newts' eyes in some dusky spinney just offstage. The entire action of the play occurs in what is called the Slab Room, described in the program as "a small, paint-bespattered hole adjacent to the Design Studio at A. F. Stobo and Co. Carpet Manufacturers of Elderslie, near Paisley." Here, half a dozen ill-schooled, coarse-mouthed, prankish young men stand at worktables ("slabs") and prepare the paints that are used in the design of what must have been, even in the fifties, exceptionally hideous carpets. The author, John Byrne, who collaborated on the setting of "Slab Boys" with Ray Recht and on the costumes with Robert Wojewodski, was born in Paisley, in 1940, and served as a slab boy in his late teens, before entering the Glasgow School of Art. The autobiographical content of the play is evidently high; like many a writer before him who began life at a level of mere drudgery (Keats as a stableboy, Dickens in the blacking factory) and lifted himself by dint of talent into the world of the arts, Mr. Byrne seems to have summoned up his recollections, both comic and miserable, as a means of exorcising them. To the extent that he troubles with a plot at all, it is a ramshackle one, which increasingly falls back upon slapstick farce; its poignancy springs from our awareness that at least one among those feckless fellows will be lucky enough to escape from the paint-bespattered hole and make a place for himself in the sun.

The members of the cast, which includes Kevin Bacon, Brian Benben, and Val Kilmer, do their best to maintain suitable lower-class Scottish accents but have been encouraged by the director, Robert Allen Ackerman, to shout at the top of their lungs, and the shouting rendered much information and perhaps much humor unintelligible to me. Merwin Goldsmith, the bullying boss of the Slab Room, is among the loudest of the shouters, starting with his very first lines and, in terms of decibels, having nowhere to go thereafter, and Madeleine Potter, as a sketcher of designs, provides a scream that may well be nightly shattering wine goblets in far-off Perth Amboy. In the theatre today, what a battering our poor ears undergo! Once upon a time, people leaned forward in their seats to hear Duse whisper.

—BRENDAN GILL

OFF BROADWAY

Goodbye, Grandpa

"GOODNIGHT, GRANDPA," a non-play that opened and closed at the Entermedia, gave every indication, right from the start, of being merely a setup for a personal appearance by Milton Berle as an old Jew on the verge of his hundredth birthday, but it was Mr. Berle's insistence on really acting the role that gave the evening whatever substance it had—that and the performance of Lee Wallace as his crony of the past sixty years or so. These tottery stereotypes squabbled and delivered the sort of insulting one-liners that would have seemed more appropriate at the old Lindy's than they did on a stage. The script is made up of flashbacks, in which episodes in Grandpa's life are indicated rather than dramatized. Things picked up a bit in the second act, much of which was devoted to Grandpa's hundredth-birthday party and to a revelation of medium importance. (The only important revelation—to me, anyway, who have never thought much of Berle as a standup comic—was his ability as an actor; I already knew about Mr. Wallace.) But by then it was too late. Perhaps the real trouble was that Grandpa was underage by nineteen hundred years; these days it's Two-Thousand-Year-Old Men who clutch the heart and fracture the funny bone.

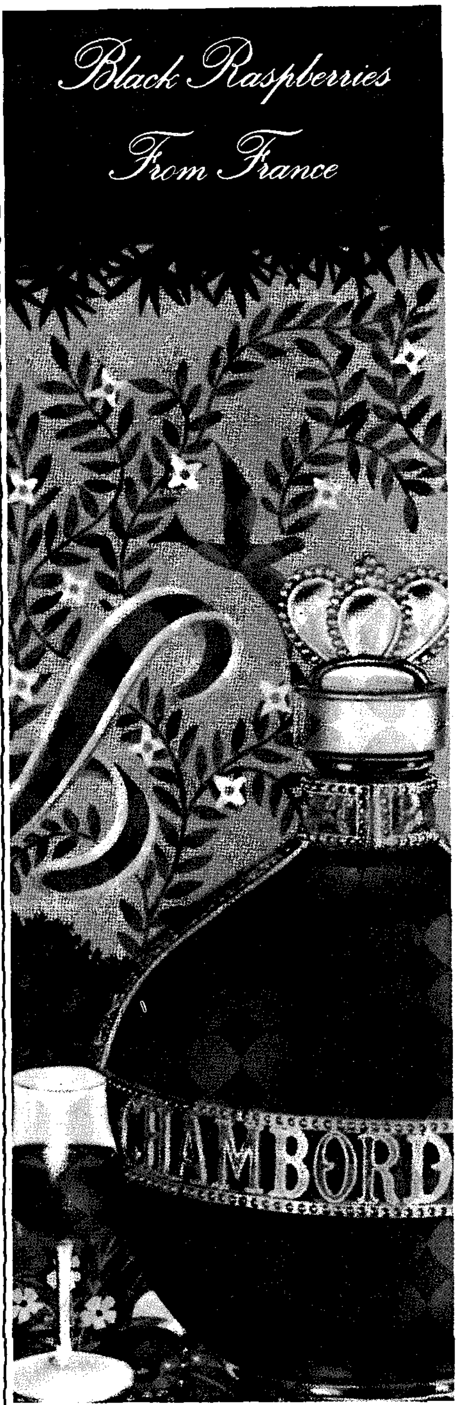
—EDITH OLIVER

•

Unlike its cousin the rabbit, the pika stores food for the winter. It's a saver not a spender. The pika doesn't live off a wallet of plastic credit cards or tattered press credentials. Its food (grass) is carefully saved and stored under rocks for the hard times ahead.

Nightclub goers would do well to emulate the pika's behavior. We've been conditioned for so long to splurge, or spend it all on the big night, the $16 concert, or $20 disco light show that we don't learn the lesson of the little pika who, unlike his rabbit cousins, often starve in great numbers in the winter.—*Adv. in the Village Voice.*

Pika just isn't ready for the big time.



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MUSICAL EVENTS

Magical Opera

IN this country, Handel has still to take his due high place in the operatic repertory. He begins to: next season the Metropolitan Opera stages "Rinaldo," and the New York City Opera "Alcina." The last decade has not been quite Handel-less: the City Opera put on a lamentable "Giulio Cesare;" in Houston and in Ottawa there were spectacular, if musically barbarous, productions of "Rinaldo;" San Francisco imported the English National's "Cesare." And among small-theatre presentations there were two so remarkable as to be, I'd say, international landmarks in the Handel revival. One was the American Repertory Theatre's "Orlando," conducted by Craig Smith and directed by Peter Sellars, which ran for forty performances in Cambridge in 1981-82; and the other, Washington University in St. Louis's "Orlando," directed musically and dramatically by Nicholas McGegan, which was performed thrice last month as part of the university's Baroque Festival.

Scenically, these two shows were at poles of Handelian presentation. Cambridge's "Orlando" opened in Mission Control at Cape Canaveral and moved into the Everglades, where Dorinda, in cutoff jeans, lived in an Airstream camper; Orlando wore an orange space suit. St. Louis's "Orlando" was set in a loving reconstruction of a Baroque stage; Orlando wore that unhappy eighteenth-century stage garment the tonnelet, a wired skirt (but wore it with more grace than perhaps anyone since Nijinsky in "Le Pavillon d'Armide" has shown). In other ways, the two "Orlando"s had much in common. They were set on an axis of belief that Handel is a great composer and a great dramatist whose operas do not need to be cut and shuffled. (That creed seldom sounds in big-house productions.) Both were complete; "Orlando" contains two and a half hours of music. (The Ottawa "Rinaldo" held only fourteen whole airs of the thirty-one in the original version; the City Opera "Cesare" only three of its thirty-one.) Both observed the elaborate stage directions in full—with the difference that Cambridge represented them in modern guise. In Act I, "the Magician comes forth and waves his Wand, at which a large Fountain rises out of the Earth and conceals *Medoro*." In Cambridge it was a square steel drinking fountain that rose from the stage, in St. Louis a Baroque affair with glistering tinsel water jets. At the close of Act II, the hero was borne skyward by, respectively, a space rocket and a swan-drawn chariot amid bursts of aerial fireworks. Both productions eschewed realistic acting and adopted a repertory of formalized movement carefully matched to the music. The St. Louis singers suggested eighteenth-century stage prints and drawings animated, while the Cambridge singers found contemporary analogues of the emblematic poses and gestures of heroic resolve, playfulness, etc.

I first came across and admired Mr. McGegan's work twelve years ago when he, an undergraduate at Cambridge University, conducted François-André Danican Philidor's "Tom Jones," in his own edition. He later came to Philidor's defense in London, conducting productions of "Blaise le Savetier," "Le Jardinier et Son Seigneur," "Tom Jones" again, and "Le Maréchal Ferrant;" recorded Rameau's "La Princesse de Navarre" and "Naïs" (a production of which he also conducted at the theatre in Versailles and at the Old Vic), on Erato; and in castles near Vienna put on candlelit enactments of Handel's "Apollo e Dafne" and "La Resurrezione." His concern for Baroque music played on the proper instruments and sung in a true style spread to concern for all aspects of effectively presenting the Baroque repertory. The "Orlando" he directed for Washington University was the most thoroughgoing essay in Handelian operatic reconstruction I have encountered; it brought together all the research and experiment that have been conducted in the fields of musical execution, stage setting, lighting, acting style, and orchestra-to-stage relationship.

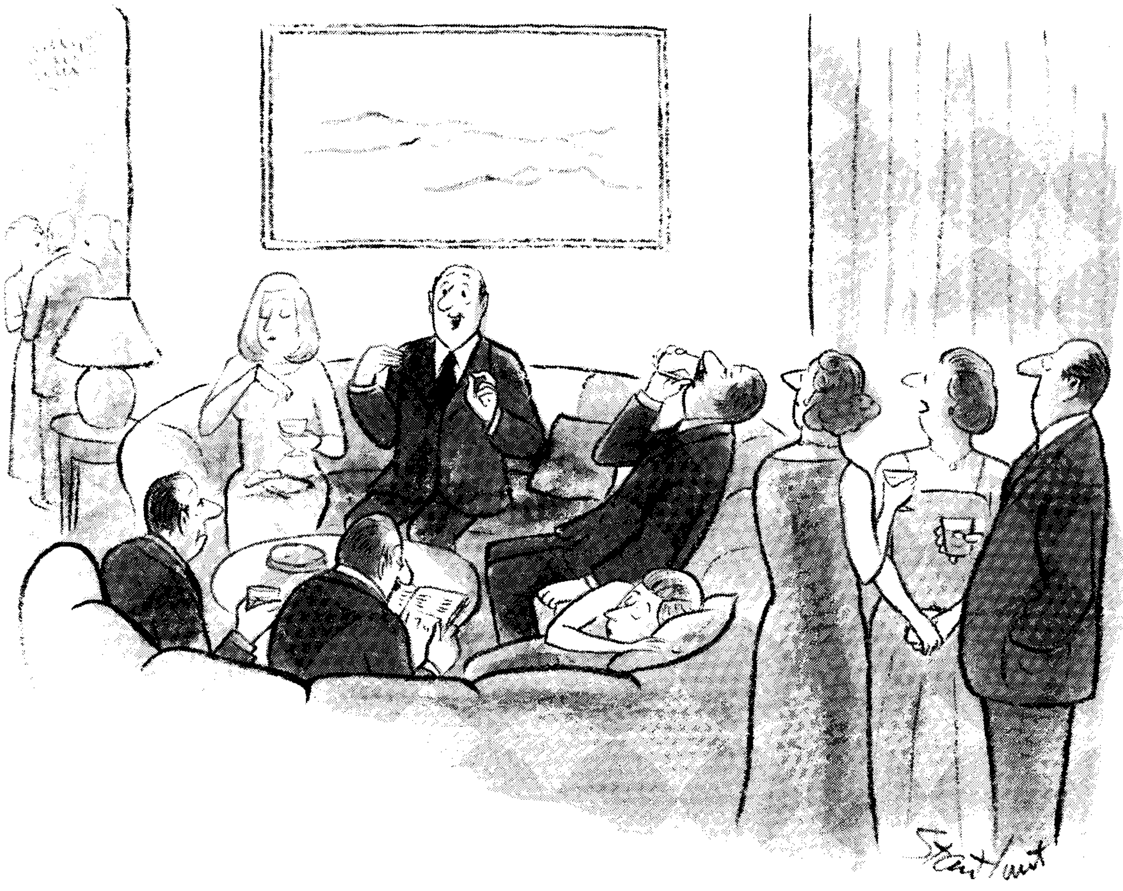
The stage of the university's Edison Theatre was lit by a warm, living glow of simulated candlelight—candle bulbs and gilt reflectors placed where eighteenth-century candles would have been, with just enough flicker introduced to animate the effect, and not so much as to be distracting. (The technique was developed from one used now in the eighteenth-century Drottningholm Theatre, outside Stockholm, where old sets and machinery survive.) Except by two chandeliers suspended above the orchestra the house itself was unlit—not willingly, I was told, but because the electric circuits offered no choice between darkness and a modern glare, intermediate settings being unstable. The facsimile of the 1732 bilingual libretto which was available had to be conned in advance. Because the theatre has small wing space, scene changes were effected not by the sliding wings and shutters of the eighteenth century but by flown wings and backcloths. Although the movement was vertical, not horizontal, the effect of one scene in painted perspective swiftly covering or revealing another was preserved. The décor was by Scott Blake, a junior from Tennessee. Behind a painted proscenium flanked by the traditional niched statues of Music and Painting he created groves, grottoes, and temples. A surging ocean rolled on two long, stage-spanning cylinders; a fabulous sea beast traversed its surface. At the close, the stage direction "At this Instant the Statue of *Mars* rises in the Middle of the Temple, with a Fire kindled on the Altar" was faithfully carried out. Mr. Blake's figure drawing is still weak—his God of Love and Heroes of Antiquity looked like caricatures, and his Mars appeared to be drunk—and the actual painting of the scenes was perhaps too impressionistic in application. But as a zestful, enthusiastic vision of a Baroque stage in motion this was a brilliant achievement, a modern evocation of the stages pictured in the enthralling exhibition, "Baroque Theatre and Stage Design," that was also part of the university's festival. Donna Keesee's costumes were admirable in cut and color. There was an orchestra of twenty-four—including three harpsichords and two theorbos—made up of the ten-strong Toronto ensemble Tafelmusik, members of the university's collegium, and two guests. It was disposed as in the old seating plans, not sunk into a modern pit. Mr. McGegan presided at the central harpsichord, with the continuo cello beside him, playing from the same score. Most of the instrumentalists—including the continuo and the obbligato players—could see and hear and take cues directly from the singers; balance and ensemble were sensitive and just. Pitch was A 415. Only the pair of horns that should second the hero as he compares himself to Alcides and Peleus' son was missing. The recorders, which have only twenty-nine bars all evening (assisting at a scene change in Act I, and breathing a sudden new enchantment over the landscape of Angelica's "Verdi piante," in Act II), were present. The beauty, the gentleness, the vigor and variety of Handel's scoring were revealed as by a modern orchestra they cannot be. The *violette marine* lines that accompany Orlando's arioso (when the maddened hero, believing he has slain Angelica, sinks into a stupefied slumber) were taken by a viola d'amore and a muted viola; the sad yet soothing dusky-gold sound ravished the senses.

The title role was written for an alto castrato, the great Senesino. Winton Dean, in his "Handel and the Opera Seria," remarks that castrati "appear to be among the few facilities not available at an American university." When Handel himself lacked one for a revival, he usually reassigned the role to a woman, and big houses today usually follow suit, with Janet Baker (in London) or Tatiana Troyanos (in San Francisco) as Caesar, Marilyn Horne (in Houston and Ottawa, soon in New York) as Rinaldo. But there is an increasing tendency to use countertenors; good countertenors seem to be in abundant supply now, and as a rule they are steadier, less vibrato-prone, than most female singers. (Perhaps the time has come for an "authentic" revival of Bellini's first opera, "Adelson e Salvini," in which Nelly, Fanny, and Mme. Rivers were first played by young men.) In St. Louis, Orlando was sung by Drew Minter, a New York countertenor most often heard here in consort work with Concert Royal and Pomerium Musices. He is a bewitching artist. Most of what the composer Johann Joachim Quantz said about Senesino can be applied without reserve to Mr. Minter as Orlando:

> He had a clear, equal and sweet contralto voice, with a perfect intonation and an excellent shake. His manner of singing was masterly. Though he never loaded Adagios with too many ornaments, yet he delivered the original and essential notes with the utmost refinement. He sang Allegros with fire, and marked rapid divisions in an articulate and pleasing manner. His countenance was well adapted to the stage, and his action was natural and noble.

From Quantz's description only "powerful," "great" before "fire," "from the chest" after "divisions," and references to Senesino's "elocution unrivalled" and "majestic figure" have been omitted. Mr. Minter's voice is not powerful, although in the little theatre, a six-hundred-and-fifty-seater, his passages of parade and his bravura cadenzas rang out brilliantly. Some low notes that he touched in tenor tones were agreeable, but he shunned sudden, startling register shifts—baroque in every sense—such as the countertenor René Jacobs espouses for special effect. His Italian was clear and correct rather than forcefully uttered. "Natural" may be a surprising epithet for the vividly mannered action Mr. McGegan had taught his cast, but Mr. Minter executed it with confidence and conviction that made it seem the music's natural counterpart. His beauty of timbre and of phrasing was enhanced by beauty of person—a potent weapon in any opera singer's artistic armory. Christine Armistead (Angelica), Sally Bradshaw (Dorinda), Deborah Harrison (Medoro), and Nicholas Solomon (Zoroaster) were fluent Handelians with light, clear, accurate voices and stylishly eloquent manners. There were a few moments of impure timbre or less than perfect intonation, it is true, but generally the singers were alluring, beguiling, affecting.

Musically, "Orlando" is one of Handel's richest and most rewarding operas. Emotionally and dramatically, it treads the varied, intricate tracks of love's mazes with delicacy, urgency, and passion. And, as Mr. Dean remarks, "its situations are psychologically and universally true and can carry a profound symbolic content." In connection with it he cites "The Magic Flute." Reviewing the Cambridge production, I cited "Figaro" and "Così Fan Tutte." (The heroine of the last, like her heroic namesake in the "Orlando Furioso," resolves to follow her beloved to the wars; he likens himself to the infatuate Orlando and the love-smitten Medoro. In Han-



"Unfortunately, Edgar's enthusiasms are not infectious."

del's opera, as in the "Flute," the hero is watched over by a wise, benign bass, Zoroaster.) It is easy to understand why the people of Boston and Cambridge, able to visit "Orlando" again and again, did so. I saw the St. Louis "Orlando" twice, entering and gladly reëntering a world of delight, enchantment, and adventure. I hope the people who put on the Met "Rinaldo" and the City Opera "Alcina" have seen and learned from both the Cambridge and the St. Louis productions. (The Met "Rinaldo" comes from Ottawa, a centenary gift from Canada, but it should not repeat musical and dramatic mistakes that were made there.) Large houses, with orchestras and, often, singers unversed in eighteenth-century music, have a harder time of it. They need all the help they can get.

THE Juilliard American Opera Center's production of Bellini's "I Capuleti ed i Montecchi," in the Juilliard Theatre last month, conducted by Denis Vaughan and directed by Ian Strasfogel, was a rather tame affair. In earlier operas, Bellini laid the foundations of *canto d'azione*, that vigorous, even violent declamatory style. When "I Capuleti" appeared, in Venice in 1830, the audience was surprised to discern what one critic called "a completely new genre, not noisy, but pensive, harmonious, and very gentle." This manner Bellini then made his specialty, while Donizetti and then Verdi developed the *canto d'azione*. But "I Capuleti" is not all gentle. Much of it should be fiery. Wilhelmine Schröder-Devrient—Beethoven's great Leonore in 1822, then Wagner's first Adriano, Senta, and Venus—was a fiery, dashing, impetuous Romeo, as Wagner recalls in "Mein Leben." Wagner's niece Johanna, his first Elisabeth, made her London début in 1856 as Romeo, and in the reminiscences of Benjamin Lumley, the impresario of Her Majesty's, we read:

> She appeared: tall, stately, self-possessed, clothed in glittering gilded mail, with her fine fair hair flung in masses upon her neck: a superb air that seemed to give full earnest of victory, and a step revealing innate majesty and grandeur in every movement. . . . She sang! The sonorous voice, which heralded the mission of the young warrior to his enemies, rang through the house as penetrating and as awakening as the summons of a clarion.

The Juilliard Romeo, Lucille Beer, made her entrance meekly, diffidently. She seemed not to have studied how gallant young warriors bear themselves and move or to have reflected that Bellini's Romeo is not Shakespeare's but the dreaded, dauntless captain of the Ghibelline army. Her voice was backward, without flash or urgency. Her musical interpretation was sluggish and sentimental, if not without feeling. The Juliet, Katherine Terrell, was a dull actress until, upon awakening in the tomb, she became deplorably kittenish. Her voice is pretty, and there were some sweetly turned phrases; sometimes she pushed it instead of letting it flow. The Tybalt, Franco Farina, was beefy, not elegant or buoyant, and reluctant to spin refined phrases in head voice.

All the "Capuleti" performances I have heard—conducted by Lorin Maazel, Claudio Abbado, Giuseppe Patanè, Eve Queler, now Mr. Vaughan—have lacked brio, have been monotonous and below tempo. All but one: Sarah Caldwell's in Boston in 1975. There the "pensive, harmonious, and very gentle" episodes were thrown into relief by the reckless glitter of the spirited scenes. One doesn't go to a school performance expecting polished perfection; one does expect verve and enthusiasm. Mr. Strasfogel's direction was flat (in the quintet the principals stood like dummies), and sometimes silly (before the duel Tybalt poked at Romeo through bars). Ming Cho Lee's set was an arcaded chapter house panelled in green marble, with different arches opened to suggest the six different scenes. From Bellini's autograph (which is published in facsimile by Garland), Mr. Vaughan had restored Bellini's original, sometimes unorthodox, and delicately deliberate orchestration. He had also made several little cuts—among them, the final page.

THE Met revived "Don Carlos" last week, still in Italian translation. The plain wooden towers of David Reppa's unit set have now been clad in gilt-framed metallic panels and topped with tracery. They look richer. The *site riant* outside the Yuste monastery is less bleak, but the immense trees and the carpet of myriad flowers that the chorus and Tybalt tell of are still left to the imagination. In the coronation scene there is no stinting on supers, but the necessary onstage band fails to put in an appearance.

Mirella Freni returns to the company after a fifteen-year absence, to sing Elizabeth. Like Renata Scotto, she is a lyric soprano who has deserted

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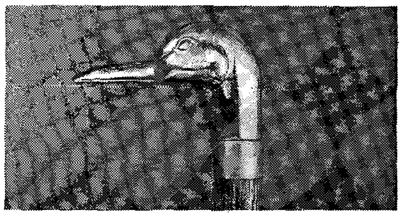

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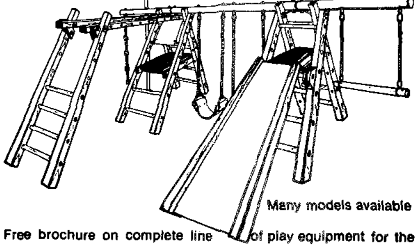

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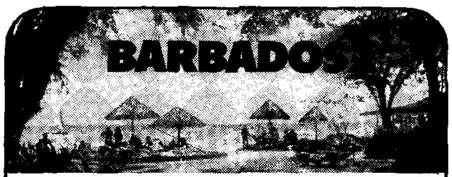

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her natural repertory in order to tackle heavier roles. For Karajan in Salzburg she sang Elizabeth in 1975, Aida in 1980. That first Elizabeth was exquisitely voiced, dulcet and gentle, meltingly beautiful in the final duet; so was the Elizabeth she sang for Abbado at La Scala two years later. At the Met, she sought volume and penetration at the cost of purity and sweetness; the lines did not float. Her vocalism was controlled and accurate—she has not become strident, as Miss Scotto has—but lacked amplitude and did not have the compensatory charm of timbre that once informed it. She is not a tragic actress—a dignified little doll of a queen, rather.

Nicolai Ghiaurov's Philip was a late, fainter impression of what began over twenty years ago as a boldly etched, if never particularly subtle, portrayal. Grace Bumbry was a loud, commanding Eboli whose singing seldom suggested the "extreme elegance, frivolity, and capriciousness" required of the character. The Carlos, Ermanno Mauro, deputizing for an ill Placido Domingo, had ardent, ringing high notes, but in softer passages the voice lost quality. Louis Quilico was an off-the-rack Rodrigo. The director, John Dexter, did much to prevent close attention to the principals: Philip's air was dwarfed by a play of moving lights across the huge El Greco fresco behind him; Rodrigo's prison air accompanied the maneuvers of two armed men, marching and countermarching across the scene, now on the beat, now not. But the audience, which had come to hear the famous singers, not Verdi's noblest opera, was loud in its appreciation. After her final air, that sombre, passionate entreaty, Queen Elizabeth acknowledged the thunderous applause that greeted her and blew a kiss to the conductor, James Levine. He at least finds more in the work than a vocal circus, but his lofty conception was executed with too insistently energetic and inflexible a beat. —ANDREW PORTER

•

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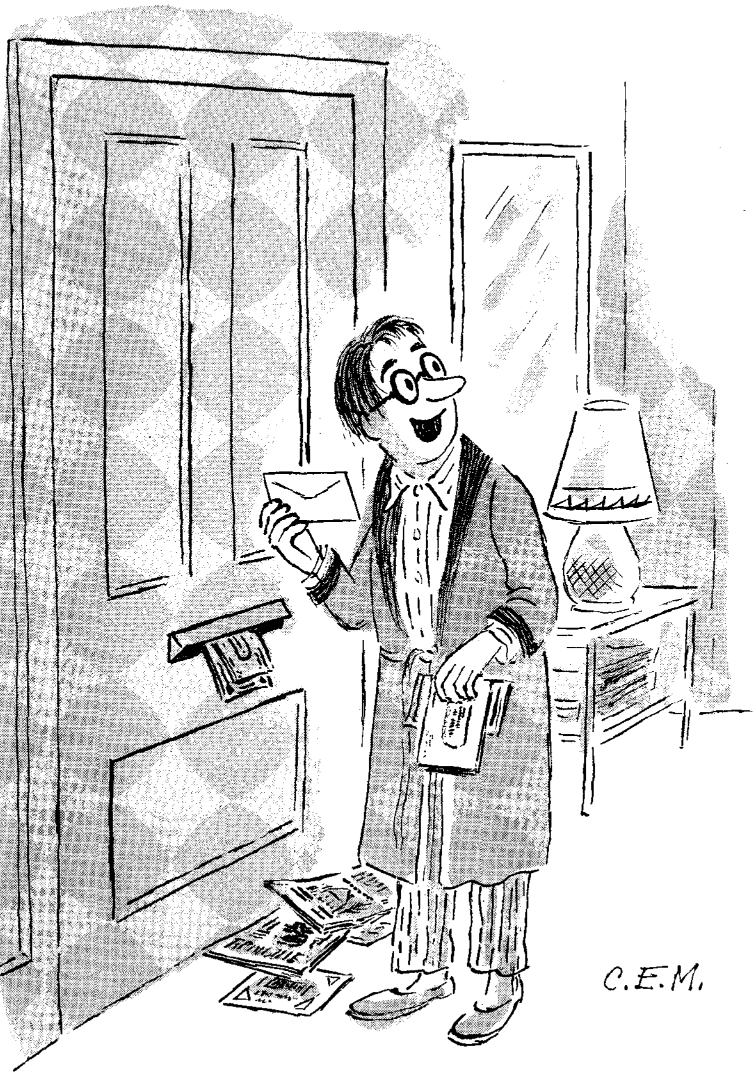
THE ART WORLD

An Akimbo Quality

THE Fairfield Porter retrospective at the Museum of Fine Arts, in Boston, is a brilliant and moving occasion. There are one hundred and forty-three pictures—oils on canvas, wood, board, panel, Masonite, cigar box, and paper; watercolors and pastels on paper; and ink on paper—and they are hung in a very long room on the second floor of I. M. Pei's new, cathedral-like West Wing. The room has been loosely divided into five or six areas that flow in and out of each other and that give the viewer space to stand back from the big paintings as well as from those surprising small ones which don't come into focus until you get fifteen feet from them. Also, there is enough space between the pictures so that they don't shoulder one another, as the pictures did in the recent Picasso extravaganza at the Museum of Modern Art. The lighting is both natural and artificial, and there is no murkiness, no reflections that talk back, no color distortion. Even the catalogue is special. It measures ten and a half inches by eleven and a quarter inches, and includes fifty-nine reproductions, almost half in good, full-page color. The show, some of which goes on the road this month (Greenville, South Carolina, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and the Whitney), should give Porter his due. In his unique way, he was healing the breach between abstraction and realism—among his masters were Vuillard and de Kooning—and there are few good American painters of whatever school who don't study him. It is only the public that has to catch up.



"Hey, Helen, we've got a letter!"

Porter was born June 10, 1907, in Winnetka, Illinois, the fourth of five children. His parents, James and Ruth (Furness), were cultured and well-to-do. When Porter was five, his father bought Great Spruce Head Island, in Penobscot Bay, Maine, and eventually put up several buildings on it (he was an architect). Porter spent almost every summer there, and he painted the island and its views over and over. He was accepted at Harvard when he was sixteen but entered a year later. He studied with Arthur Pope and Alfred North Whitehead, a lifelong influence. He also fell under the sway of Bernard Berenson. In 1928, after getting a degree in fine arts, he moved to New York and enrolled in the Art Students League. His teachers were Boardman Robinson and Thomas Hart Benton. (Porter didn't think much of either of them as painters, and told the art historian Paul Cummings that Benton had said that reality is "a series of hollows and bumps.") He came into contact with the work of Arthur Dove and John Marin. In 1932, he married Anne Channing, a New Englander he had met while he was at Harvard, and during the next twenty-four years they had five children—John, Laurence, Jeremy, Katharine, and Elizabeth. He saw an exhibition of Vuillard and Bonnard at the Chicago Art Institute in 1938, and four years later he met Elaine Fried and Willem de Kooning. (They were married the next year.) Vuillard became his guidon and de Kooning his friend and champion. Porter had his first one-man show at thirty-two. For a time in the forties, he lived in a house on East Fifty-second Street, staying until 1949, when he moved permanently to Southampton, Long Island. His poet friends began to gather around him in the early fifties (Frank O'Hara, James Schuyler, John Ashbery, Kenneth Koch), and so did new painter friends (Alex Katz, Robert Dash, Jane Freilicher, Neil Welliver, Jane Wilson, Paul Georges). In 1951, Elaine de Kooning suggested to Thomas Hess, then an editor of *ARTnews*, that he hire Porter as a critic. Porter was delighted, and for ten years he wrote critical pieces for *ARTnews* and *The Nation* on everyone from Homer and Sargent to Tworkov, Rauschenberg, David Smith, Morandi, Motherwell, and Edwin Dickinson. He was as natural a writer as he was a painter—graceful, direct, honest, rhythmic. Apparently, he spoke the same way. Here are two passages to compare. The first is from the Cummings interview:

> The Armory Show was a complete disaster to American art, because it made people think that you *had* to do things in a certain style, and they gave up what they did in order to do this new thing. It was a little bit like selling whiskey to the Indians. A few painters got something

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> from it . . . John Marin got a lot from it. But American art was provincial before, and it became more provincial as a result of the Armory Show.

This one is on Giacometti's figures, and is from "Art in Its Own Terms," an invaluable collection of his essays and criticism assembled three or four years ago by the painter Rackstraw Downes and published by Taplinger:

> The thinness makes the volume of the figure secondary to the volume of infinite space: the figure places infinity as much as it places itself. Infinity, in short, has the single limit of its beginning; it is actual, it exists, and one can experience it, in the way one experiences the sea, by looking at it from the beach.

In 1961, he stopped reviewing regularly, partly because he wanted to paint full time, and partly, Anne Porter has said, because the responsibility of judging other painters' work had become too "heavy." Between 1961 and his death, in 1975, he had fourteen one-man exhibitions and he taught at Amherst, Yale, Southampton College, and the Maryland Institute. He died unexpectedly on September 18th, in Southampton. He was, by all indications, just approaching the height of his powers.

PORTER is almost impossible to classify. Vuillard *was* a strong influence, and so were de Kooning and Marin and Velázquez and a contemporary Belgian painter named Van Hooten. Porter used northeast American light the way Homer and Hopper did. (He once told his wife that New York City light was the best in the world.) He was a kind of Impressionist and he was a kind of realist who used a lot of abstraction. He became a superb colorist, and his later paintings, as Kenworth Moffett, the exhibition's curator, points out in the catalogue, have a Fauve quality. His colors rush at you, yet they serenely define what they are coloring. His paintings have great warmth, and they also have a sly, primitive quality—the figures are sometimes stiff and ceremonial, but the eyes are hypnotic. Porter painted his life: the breakfast dishes left on the table; an angry Southampton ocean; his wife leaning against a door in Maine; a screened porch, empty except for a dark wooden garden chair and a ghostly wicker chair; a tatty stretch of Main Street in Southampton; a huge yellow house in Maine almost sailing off its green hill into a blinding blue day. He never contrived his subject matter; it found him.

Two of the best paintings in the show are "A Short Walk" and "A Sudden Change of Wind." "A Short Walk" was painted in 1963, and measures five feet by four feet. It is one of the great autumn paintings. The bottom half is back-yard lawn in Southampton. The grass, in broad brushstrokes, is purple and green. Sand-colored leaves are scattered about. An elm trunk stands at left center in the top half of the picture, and on the trunk is reflected blue light from the pale sky. A high hedge, its deep-green shadowed side to us, runs behind the elm and is topped by a surf of orangy light and then by lavender and orange trees. A wild flash of yellow shines through the bottom left of the hedge. The yellow helps bring the painting together, and so do the two distant figures—James Schuyler and Elizabeth Porter—walking away from us hand in hand along the hedge. The child, in white, has her head bowed, as children do when they walk, and Schuyler, in white and khaki, looks as if he had adjusted to her gait. A bright-blue towel hanging on a line in the far right middle ground of the picture is like a little shout in all the peace.

"A Sudden Change of Wind" was done in 1973. It measures two feet by two and a half feet—one of the small paintings that get better and better as you move away from them. It has five echoing horizontal sections. The lowest is a narrow mauve beach, and the next is gray-blue ebbing water. The third band consists of hard, relentless waves, their insides dark brown, their tops white, and the water between them lavender. The clouds that meet the water are the fourth band, and they repeat the mauve of the beach. The final band is the sky above the clouds, which repeats the soft gray-blue of the ebbing water. The picture is as close as Porter got to balancing abstraction and realism.

ONE of Porter's friends is Prescott Schutz, a tall, narrow man in his early thirties, with a tall forehead and a gentle smile. "I was Porter's dealer at Hirschl & Adler during the last two years of his life," Schutz said recently. "I had essentially just come out of Columbia, where I had a B.A. in art history, and I had never heard of him. I didn't know what to make of him after I'd met him. Was he shy or rude or what? He had absolutely no small talk. If you said, 'Isn't it a beautiful day?,' or 'Isn't the traffic unbelievable?,' he would just look at you. But when he spoke, what he said was to the point. He would appear unannounced at the gallery when he had a new batch of paintings, and if I was busy with someone he would just lurk. When I was free, there would be a quiet greeting, and he would immediately start describing what he had brought. When he finished, if we weren't going to have lunch, he would simply walk out—no goodbyes; just vanish. Every once in a while, he would bring in a quirky painting. One had a name like 'Twilight,' and it was darker than a Blakelock. You could barely make it out, but he was vastly amused by it. Another showed a line of almost black spruces, like a wall, with a little sky showing above. I didn't think it worked, and I told him. He took it home, and he was as pleased as punch with what he had done when he brought it back. He had put a couple of tiny patches of lighter green on the spruces, and that was all. It never sold.

"Porter is not an easy painter, despite his deceptively pleasing nature and the pleasantness of his subject matter. He had an elusive, fluid quality, and he constantly challenged and questioned what he did. He was—and is—always surprising. The show will bring out his importance as a figurative painter. The current perception that he painted nothing but pretty landscapes and lovely still-lifes is quite wrong. Perhaps half his work is figurative. His figures read or listen or just sit, and, unlike Hopper's people, they are self-contained and peaceful. There is a wonderful push and pull of light and object in his figurative paintings. The flesh of the face is as important as the light setting it off, and vice versa. The show brings out two other things. One is an almost gothic-novel feeling in some of his interiors: lamps

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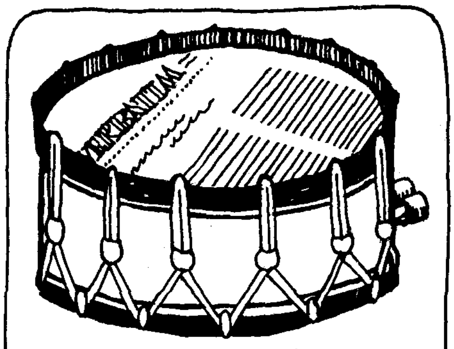

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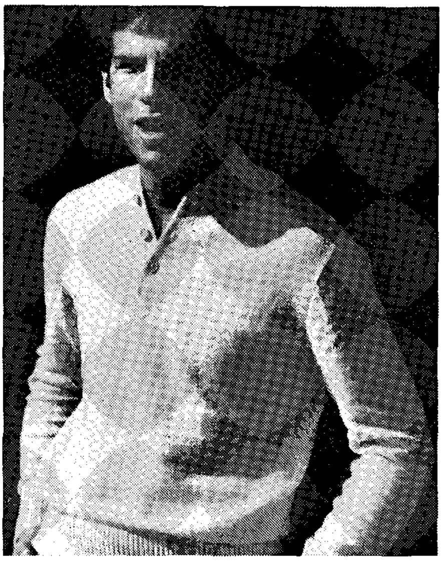
listen, chairs menace. The other is the way his Vuillard warmth is continually tempered by a kind of cold New England breath.

"Porter and his family lived in an easy, outgoing way. They spent so much time taking care of other people that their surroundings often had to fend for themselves. Their house in Southampton had been painted by its previous owner, and I think Fairfield was waiting for every last fleck of paint to fall off before he repainted. This casualness extended to his paintings, which in the summer he would line up around a porch to dry and which would be speckled with bugs' wings and dog hairs and pine needles when he brought them into the gallery."

PORTER's widow, Anne, is short and white-haired, and a strong light shines from her face. Her voice is small and calm, and she talks of her husband as if he had just gone out to buy a new signature brush. "Fairfield was very close to his mother," she has said. "She was wonderful—totally unaffected and warm and intelligent, with a great sense of social responsibility. They shared a love of reading and literature. His father was shy, and he planned wonderful trips to Europe to look at museums and churches when Fairfield was growing up. Fairfield's abruptness with people had to do with an absolute inability to make or tolerate small talk. I did notice that toward the end of his life he began to develop some patience for people talking about the best motel to stay in in Florida or who to go to for false teeth. The house was always full of friends and the people he loved. I remember writing to my mother that it was the first time in fourteen months that we hadn't had a houseguest. Fairfield was a transparent person who had an absolute trust in people. A cleaning woman told him once that her sixty-dollar watch had mysteriously disappeared in the house. He reached in his pocket and gave her sixty dollars. Another time, he took an old family clock for repair to a man who said he did all the clocks for a New York university. The man said the job would be difficult and that Fairfield had to pay six hundred dollars in advance. He wrote out a check immediately, and when we left said wasn't it nice how the man had accepted his check without question. I think that all we ever saw of that clock again was its case. Fairfield was as generous as he was trusting. One eve-



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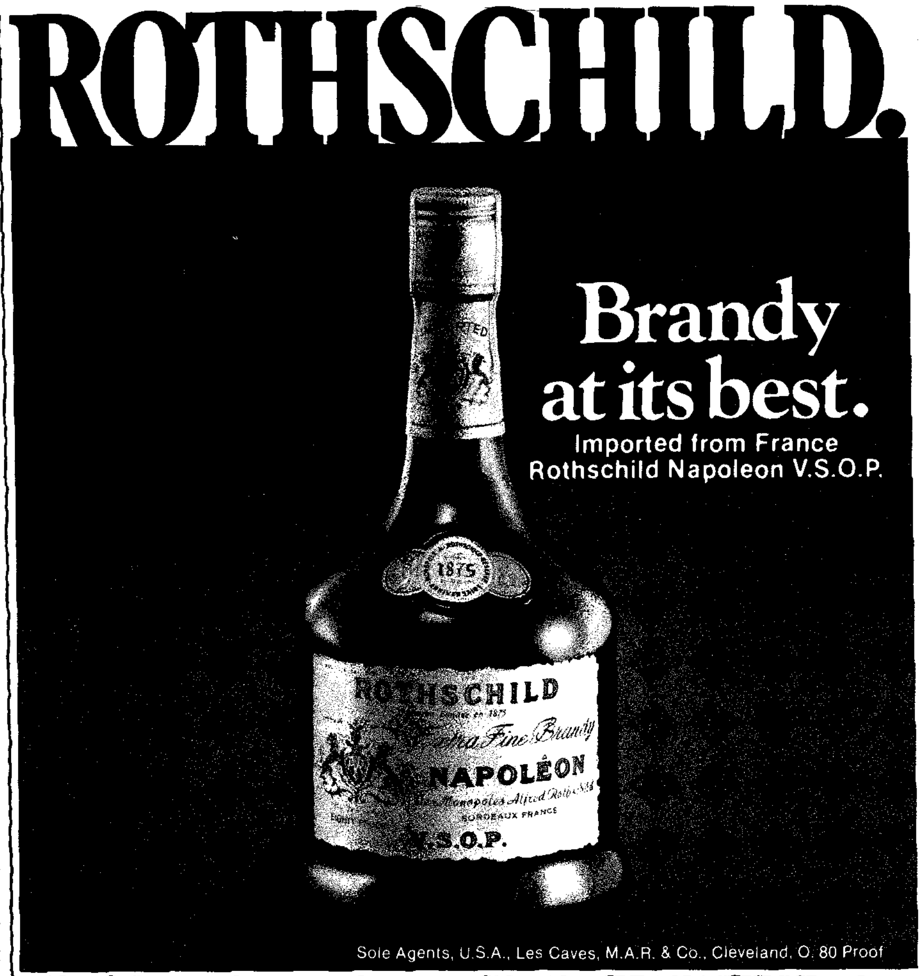
ning in Southampton, some men who worked for an art-supply company he used came to the door and asked if he would contribute a picture to a raffle for a synagogue in Brooklyn. He had gone to bed with Wallace Stevens' poems, saying he was going to understand them if it killed him. But he got up and went to his studio and picked out a painting and told them to keep it if they couldn't raffle it. He didn't give many of us in the family paintings, because he said it would be a waste of money for us to keep them. I have a painting and a couple of lovely watercolors, and my daughters Kate and Lizzie each have a few pictures. Katie and her husband live out West, but they came to the show because they're crazy about Fairfield's paintings. They said they couldn't believe how many they wanted to steal.

"I don't think any of us minded posing for Fairfield. When he was doing his portrait of Katie sitting in the big wing chair by the fireplace—she was just five—she came and told me, 'Daddy is paying me four cents an hour to pose.' I wasn't that great a model. I was kind of restless, but I loved posing for the picture of me standing in a doorway, because at that particular time nothing was burning up in the kitchen and none of the children were screaming and we had a chance to talk about so many things. I loved to hear him talk. He talked so well at dinner parties I hated to be out of the room and not hear him. When we were in Maine, he often painted one picture in the morning and another in the afternoon. Then he'd put them out to dry. If anyone commented about them—why don't you change that elbow or tone down that color—he'd listen and say yes yes, and leave it exactly as it was. Sometimes, though, he would be displeased with a painting, and when I'd go to his studio to tell him it was time for lunch I'd find him looking and looking at the picture that bothered him. This might go on for years. The portrait of Jerry sitting at the breakfast table was done in 1955, and he had never been satisfied with it. But he fixed it at last, not long before he died, and now it's perfect. People have said he arranged the objects in his still-lifes, but that isn't true. He often told his students of the importance of accident in painting. One morning, he told me not to touch the breakfast dishes, that he wanted to paint them just as they were. I don't know how many days they stayed there. Another time, I was going



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through my desk, and I had stuff all over the floor and chairs and everywhere, and he painted the whole mess, and it was a lovely picture."

THE painter Robert Dash knew Porter well during the last seventeen or eighteen years of his life. In the late fifties, he shared a studio with him on Fourteenth Street, when Porter was still reviewing and would spend three or four days each week in the city looking at exhibitions. Dash is an elegant, delicate man with a thin face. He talks swiftly and eloquently, and his admiration for Porter and his work is in everything he says and paints: "Fairfield had a boyish, middle-range voice, with a soft buzz, and this incredible shock of chestnut hair that kept falling in his face. He was six feet tall, and his pants were always too short. He had the rangy movements of a seventeen-year-old, which made it uncertain whether or not he would knock over the lamp when he got up or sat down. There was an akimbo quality to him. When he was standing, he was upright but seemed tilted, as if something in him were not quite finished. He had a snort or chuckle more than a laugh. He liked to jab a finger at you and say, 'You're absolutely right.' He was one of those people who could not conceal anything. What was on his mind was a gift to you, a sharing of his intimations. His concentration was such that he could walk through a fire and not notice, like that Miss Sewell who walked into a tree and said that she had seen it but hadn't realized it. He was always shaping sentences in his head before he spoke, and they came out as if on paper. But he was never pompous. He loved New England, and since he wasn't a Yankee, he became, like a religious convert, more of a Yankee than a born Yankee. He read constantly—the Russian novelists, Susanne Langer, the poets, books on science, which he would try and relate to aesthetics. Many of his friends were poets. He knew that poets say things better, that they're the rarest of the rare. He and Anne became everyone's surrogate parents in their big house in Southampton. James Schuyler came for a weekend and stayed eleven years, and often poets would be at table simply because they needed three squares. It was a come-as-you-are household. The wallpaper upstairs was always curving off the walls, and you had to beat it back to get down the hall. Anne used to say that she'd like to live in a

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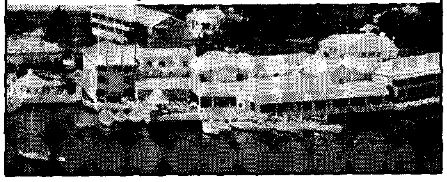

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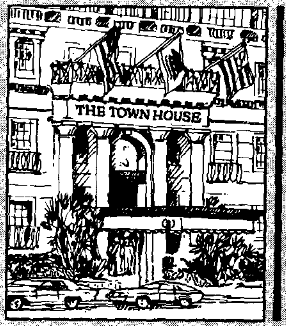

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new house and watch it go down instead of trying to keep bringing an old house up. Once, the privet hedge grew so enormous the town made Fairfield cut it. People ate at different times, and when they finished they got up from the table and left. You could wander into Fairfield's studio, which was on the second floor of a barn behind the house, and he'd say, 'Sit down, I want to paint your portrait.' He brought American portraiture into today by doing it in such a natural way. He made a portrait a painting with a figure in it, which is what a portrait should be. Fairfield was not a conventionally religious man, but he was the most spiritually driven of men. He told me once in his later years that he had to pray before he painted. Painting was never easy for him, because he never rested. When he found how to do something new, he never repeated it. He scrutinized himself constantly. He was terribly insecure about being a painter at all, about whether or not it was a fit calling for a man who didn't have to work. He said he was a learned painter, that he didn't have a natural gift—which is nonsense. His later paintings are epiphanies of light. This light is often made of shadows, and these shadows are not absences on the canvas, as they are in many paintings. The light that sings through his later paintings makes all the objects in them insubstantial. It was as if at the end he were entering the kingdom of abstraction, but on his own terms. If he had, though, he never would have run out or emptied himself. His vocabulary as a painter was too huge. I think his brush would have flown faster and faster, but things would have always been recognizable. His position as a painter was a perilous one, and he suffered a good deal from steadily going against the grain of fashion. His contrariness would have been easier if he had been poor, if he had fulminated against the current gods, if he had been mad. He was a painter's painter, a quiet painter, a very particular painter. He handled himself with modesty and requisite aloofness. The legendizers will have little to go on with Fairfield. He was an eminently grounded individualist."

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BOOKS

Getting the Hang of It

WHEN Harold Laski was made chairman of the British Labour Party after its astonishing electoral sweep in the wake of the Allied victory in Europe, there was more than a ripple of curiosity on both sides of the Atlantic about the likely impact on British politics of a towering intellectual. How would this professor, this double-dome political theorist, intimate of Justice Holmes, historian of everything from Marxism and European liberalism to the American Presidency, synchronize his vast knowledge with the day-to-day know-how of Prime Minister Clement Attlee, the upper-middle-class settlement worker, Fabian convert, survivor of Gallipoli, wartime deputy of Churchill, and first-rate parliamentarian? Many years later, the Encyclopædia Britannica offered a dim but fair obituary judgment: "His persistent efforts . . . to work out a philosophy for the British socialist movement did not bear much fruit." The 1945 onlookers did not have so long to wait. Attlee, who never used ten sentences where one would do, put it crisply: "Rum thing about Harold—never got the hang of it."

It is a definitive comment on the yawning gap between ideology and policy, between "political science" and politics, between the urge to draft a model bill and Franklin Roosevelt's impulse to trust to the pricking of his thumbs. Even in our own time, when political analysis proliferates in every daily newspaper and hourly television bulletin, the real practice of politics and the commentaries on it are farther apart than most commentators would care to admit. (It would amount to a confession of ignorance about a whole body of secret knowledge.) And whenever a new President moves into the White House, few pundits—the loftier the fewer—bother to wonder whether he will or will not get the hang of it. But Congress wonders early on, and watches and waits. In the first month of Jimmy Carter's Presidency, amazement verging on disbelief overtook the Democrats in the Senate when it appeared that the President's telephone line to the Senate was dead. This cloistered seclusion, implying that the business of congressional liaison was the preserve of the kitchen cabinet, or help, he had imported from Atlanta, testified to the new President's unawareness of the elementary fact that the first allies he must seek in Congress are the majority *and* the minority leaders in the Senate. There were many surprises of the same sort to come, and they started from the presumption that Carter, though then obscure as a public character, must have proved—in Georgia, at least—that he was a practiced political animal. It turned out that he was not. He remained for quite a time the beneficiary of the usual public vagueness outside a governor's own state about his political record and aptitude. Yet anyone who had covered Carter during his time in the state senate and as governor could have told us that he was never the literate Huck Finn and Populist reformer of our imagining but a Navy technician with an accountant's temperament, whose notion of duty was equated with such a passion for the detail of paperwork that it made him see six sides to every issue and left him in the moment of decision like a centipede with all its legs wriggling but its body immobile.

No candidate could have made a sharper contrast in character and political behavior than Ronald Reagan, though during the Presidential campaign the public knew as little about Reagan's tenure in Sacramento as it had known about Carter's in Atlanta. What the people saw—what the Presidential campaign was designed, as always, to exaggerate—was the more dashing and superficial aspects of the contrast: a natural optimist against a cautionary school principal; a confident purveyor of half-truths, and often of howling boners, which yet gave more hope (and more false hope) to more people than Carter's sober insistence that life is real and earnest and painfully complicated; a broadcaster, who had learned through years of practice, and as many as fourteen speeches a day on the road for General Electric, to be his best self talking to a couple of neighbors in a room, against a thoughtful and sometimes verbose lay preacher addressing a congregation; a seeming young Reagan against a seeming old Carter (Reagan's frequent jokes about his senility and the Reagan team's decision—before the New Hampshire primary—to organize public celebrations of his sixty-ninth birthday were enough to obliterate the "age" issue).

What we did not remember then, and what both Ford and Carter fatally discounted, was Reagan's long and arduous political apprenticeship in California, "the great microcosmic nation state of North America," which provided a trial run of just about every domestic issue that would confront a President. Reagan arrived in Sacramento as a breezy rhetorician "monumentally ignorant of state issues." Through eight years, he developed a "proclivity for doing what was necessary at the expense of his rhetoric," and he left office with nearly sixty per cent of Californians believing him to have been a good governor—"a popular Republican governor at a time his party had sunk to its lowest public esteem in American history." These are not my own judgments but quotations from Lou Cannon's "Reagan" (Putnam; $18.95), an exhaustively researched chronicle of the America that Reagan grew up in and outgrew (though never in his ideals or prejudices). Most of all, it is about the making of an idealistic small-town Midwestern youth, "intuitively keen but intellectually lazy," into a professional politician who, despite his rigidities and mooning nostalgia, has, for better or worse, "defined the ground of political discourse" and "set the nation on a course of change." Mr. Cannon, the present White House correspondent for the Washington *Post*, has followed Reagan and his associates and advisers and enemies since 1966. Two years before, in the gloom of Goldwater's Presidential defeat, Reagan's family and friends had urged him to run for governor and caused him to lament with mock distaste, "Oh, my God, they're closing in all over."

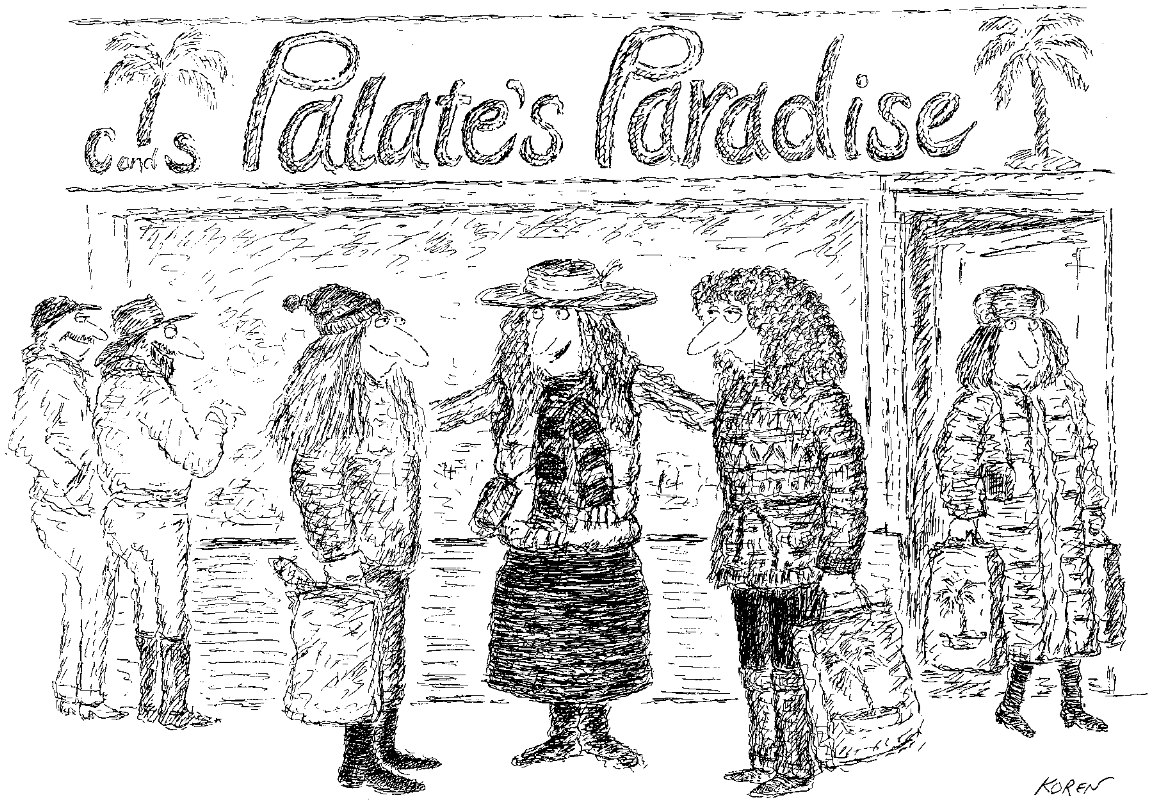
It would take another twelve years for the American people, and most national politicians, to close in on the idea that Reagan was a serious contender for the Presidency, and four more years for him to arrive in Detroit as the inevitable Republican nominee. In view of this general myopia outside California and the Southwest about his political potential, the most engrossing sections of Mr. Cannon's book are those which plot the campaigns that led first to the governorship and then to the Presidency. They constitute, in fact, the body of the book, and insofar as it isolates and weighs the political forces that can propel a man into high office it is better than anything we have had since Theodore White's first "Making of the President."

Of all the elements favorable to Reagan in his run for the governorship in 1966 were two, indigenous to California, that now appear to have been decisive in combination. One was the legacy of individualism, of freedom from party loyalty, left by Hiram Johnson's no-nonsense Progressivism, which first broke the political grip of the Southern Pacific Railroad on the state legislature, made the endorsing of candidates by parties illegal, and introduced to the ballot the cross-filing system, whereby a candidate could seek the nomination of any and all parties. Cross-filing had been abolished seven years before Reagan's try for the governorship, and party designations had been restored to the ballot five years before that. But there were enough favorite politicians of hazy party affiliation still around, and former office-holders translated to high places (most notably Earl Warren, who was once the nominee of both the Democrats and the Republicans), to offer proof that California had grown accustomed over fifty-odd years to looking out for attractive mavericks and was less likely than most states to make a fuss over a turncoat. So it was in California, probably more than elsewhere, that the choice of a Republican governor could be also that of a divorcé, a B-film actor, a relapsed New Dealer who had voted four times for Roosevelt, and a man without a machine.

The second element of Reagan's success was Governor Pat Brown's susceptibility to the San Francisco sickness: the fatal liberal confidence in Northern California as a barometer of the state's political weather. Mr. Cannon notes what experienced travellers either relish or deplore—the fact that San Francisco is "a community which is at once the most cosmopolitan and provincial in California." This makes for a cozy familial feeling among the natives and a sense of easy acceptance among visitors, but it is to be guarded against by any politician seeking statewide office. Brown ignored the signs of a rising conservatism in the three southern counties—Los Angeles, San Diego, and Orange—that together accounted for fifty per cent of the combined vote of the state's fifty-eight counties. This chronic complacency was assisted by his constant belittling of the drawing power of Reagan's platform style, which had hypnotized a whole gang of wealthy patrons at a thousand-dollar-a-plate-dinner speech for Goldwater in Los Angeles in 1964. That bravura performance, which might rouse but would not today transfix a public all too familiar with the rhetoric of the Great Communicator, was indeed the charge that fired Reagan's takeoff as a Presidential candidate.

The five and a half years that intervened between Reagan's departure from Sacramento and his arrival in the summer of 1980 at Detroit were by no means years of the locust. He had learned where power lies—even more, where Southern California power and money could be wedded in a political holding company. He had also acquired a loyal staff of advisers and go-betweens—Michael Deaver and Lyn Nofziger and Edwin Meese in the early days at Sacramento—who had wrestled with everything from welfare, conservation, and budget deficits to student tuition, abortion, and antinuclear protests. They had done constant battle with an Assembly Speaker, Jesse Unruh, who was a politician every bit as tough and adroit as Tip O'Neill. (In hindsight, it is not surprising that Mr. O'Neill's patronizing welcome to the new President—"This is the big leagues"—left Reagan unfazed.) By the time Reagan entered the White House, his kitchen cabinet was in place—a small team of veterans abler than Carter's, more honorable than Nixon's.

Mr. Cannon is so skillful at mating Reagan's gifts and flaws with the conditions that exploited them that we are led to believe Providence had a hand in the grooming of this Presidential candidate, and that by 1980 he was indeed, as Woollcott said of Noël Coward, "destiny's tot." But it is always true that the omens for an ambitious politician are mixed and fluid. The emergence of the winner can generally be seen in retrospect as the result of the luck of his backers—of cronies and sympathetic factions—in putting together with their candidate's more appealing traits just those elements



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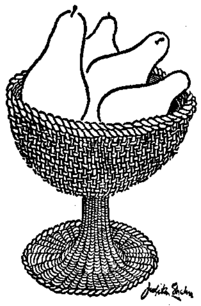
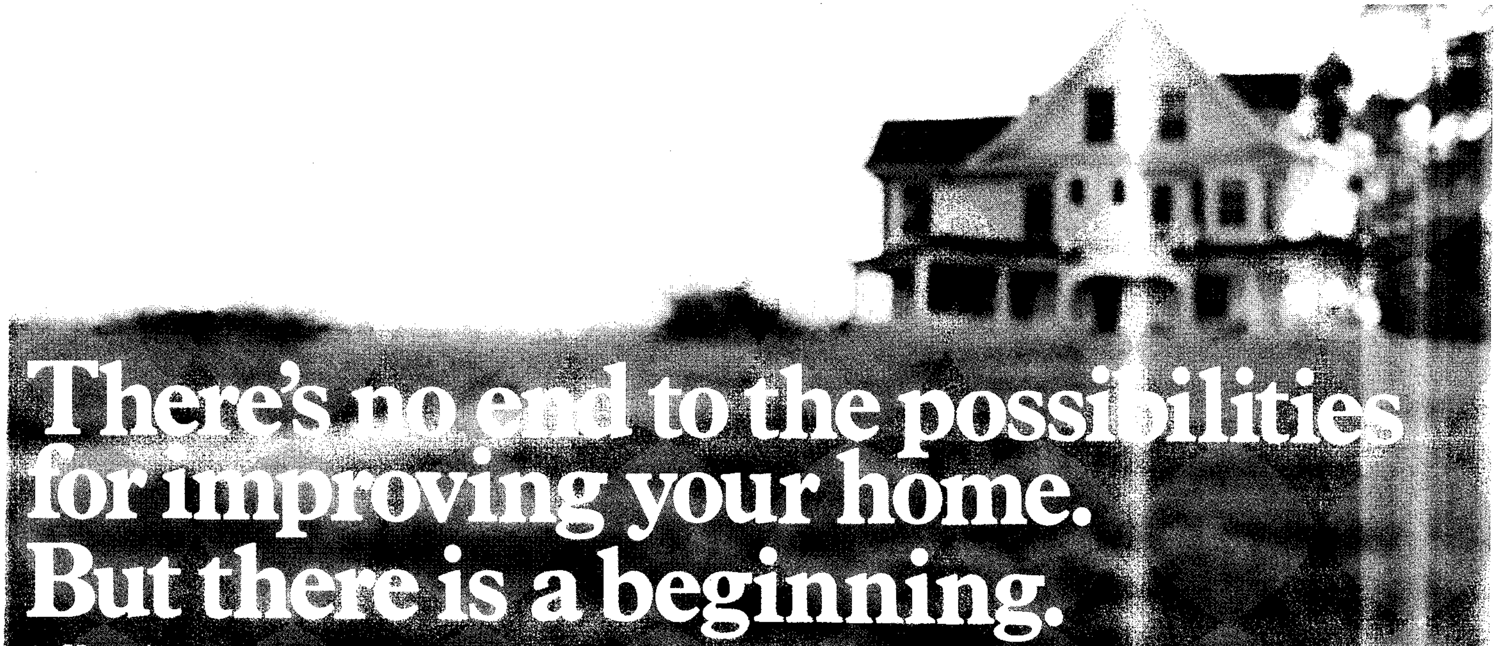
of current prejudice and of the political climate which are most apt to convince a majority of the nominating Convention that he is the right man in the right place at the right time. That he is, in a word, "available" in the peculiar American sense that James Bryce defined better than anybody: "Not even a novice in politics will suppose that [what the Convention seeks] is the best man, i.e. the wisest, strongest, and most upright. Plainly, it is the man most likely to win, the man who, to use the technical term, is most 'available.' What a party wants is not a good President but a good candidate. The party managers have therefore to look out for the person likely to gain most support, and at the same time excite least opposition." Even ninety years after that was written, it still runs counter to what millions of partisans want to believe, and it would sound, I imagine, to the multitude of ordinary voters cynical in the extreme. For Presidential campaigns are designed to affirm, and Conventions to celebrate with dinning insistence, that the candidate is indeed "the wisest, strongest, and most upright." The price for this deception has to be paid in the first six months or so of a new Administration, whose painful duty it then becomes to liquidate its campaign rhetoric and discover that its choice of policies is bereft of drama and much like that of the previous Administration.



Reagan startled everybody but his old team by acting at once, in his tactics, like a political veteran. In his first hundred days, he was up on Capitol Hill so often that a wry foreigner remarked to me, "He must have imagined that the United States had switched to a parliamentary system, where the executive is the top man in the legislature." He held sixty-nine meetings with congressmen—over four hundred of them. He bullied and wooed and cajoled wobbling senators on the telephone with a persistence that would have won the admiration of Lyndon Johnson. But if he was a sophisticated tactician he behaved like a political innocent, or a novice possessed, in stridently reiterating the campaign promises of a Reagan revolution. Old-timers could hardly credit his Boy Scout fidelity to the gaudier slogans of the campaign—a decentralized government, drastic tax cuts, higher defense spending, a balanced budget—as the priorities of actual policy. Roosevelt, too, had campaigned the first time on a platform of dramatic decentralization and the return of many federal powers to the states. Once in the White House, he wheeled a hundred and eighty degrees and wielded the executive power of the federal government like no other President in peacetime history. Reagan actually seemed to believe that he was going to cancel or reverse the movement of American history from Roosevelt to Carter. And he was so gung-ho about it, so plainly and passionately sincere in his reminders of the alarming price the country had paid for fifty years of deficit spending, so evangelical in his conviction that taxes and big government were at the root of all evil, that he managed in the first year, if not to convert the whole Congress, at least to leave even his opponents in a daze of doubt, wondering—after all the fruitless contentions of the Keynesians, the neo-Keynesians, the Friedmanites, the Cambridge school—whether he mightn't, after all and by golly, be right. (Mrs. Thatcher, in England, had launched the prototype of Reaganomics two years before, but the warning had not yet sunk in here that the heady new theory would, for an indefinite time at least, automatically raise unemployment as it lowered inflation.)

Mr. Cannon comments on the first Reagan year, "All of Reagan's development as a politician had left unchanged the basic, optimistic simplicity that was the source of his appeal—and that would also prove the source of his administration's most glaring inadequacies." In other words, Mr. Cannon maintains that both the strength of Reagan's popular appeal as a man and the developing troubles of his Presidency derive from his unbudging prairie idealism. It can also be maintained that this naïveté and the high-school-history-book view of America it fostered in a boy and man notoriously indisposed to homework led him into theories—the New Federalism, for instance—that the American form of government will not accommodate. Nor does Reagan yet appear to be convinced that a Cabinet system—the root of parliamentary government, which requires the Cabinet to initiate almost all legislation, and to stand united on the policy



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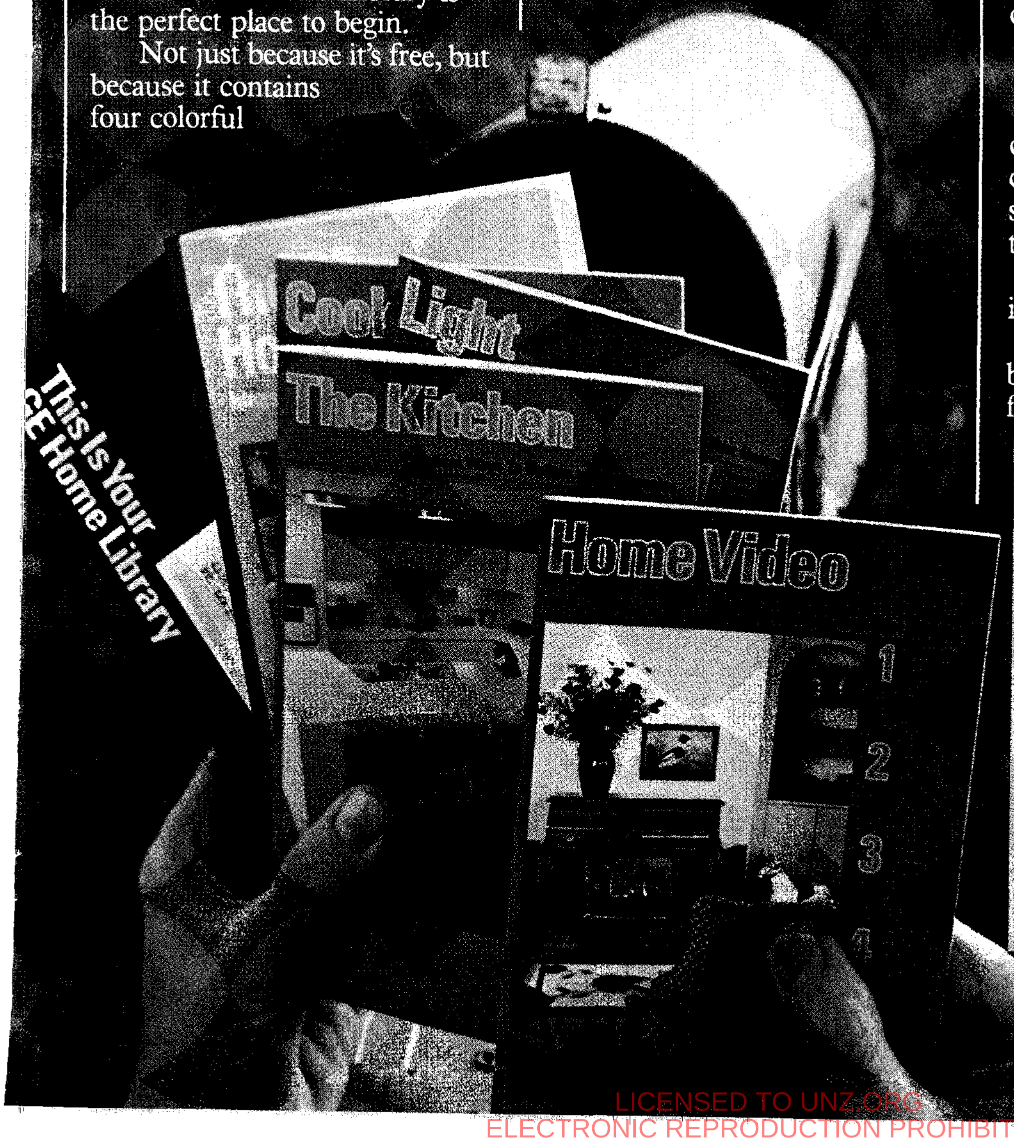

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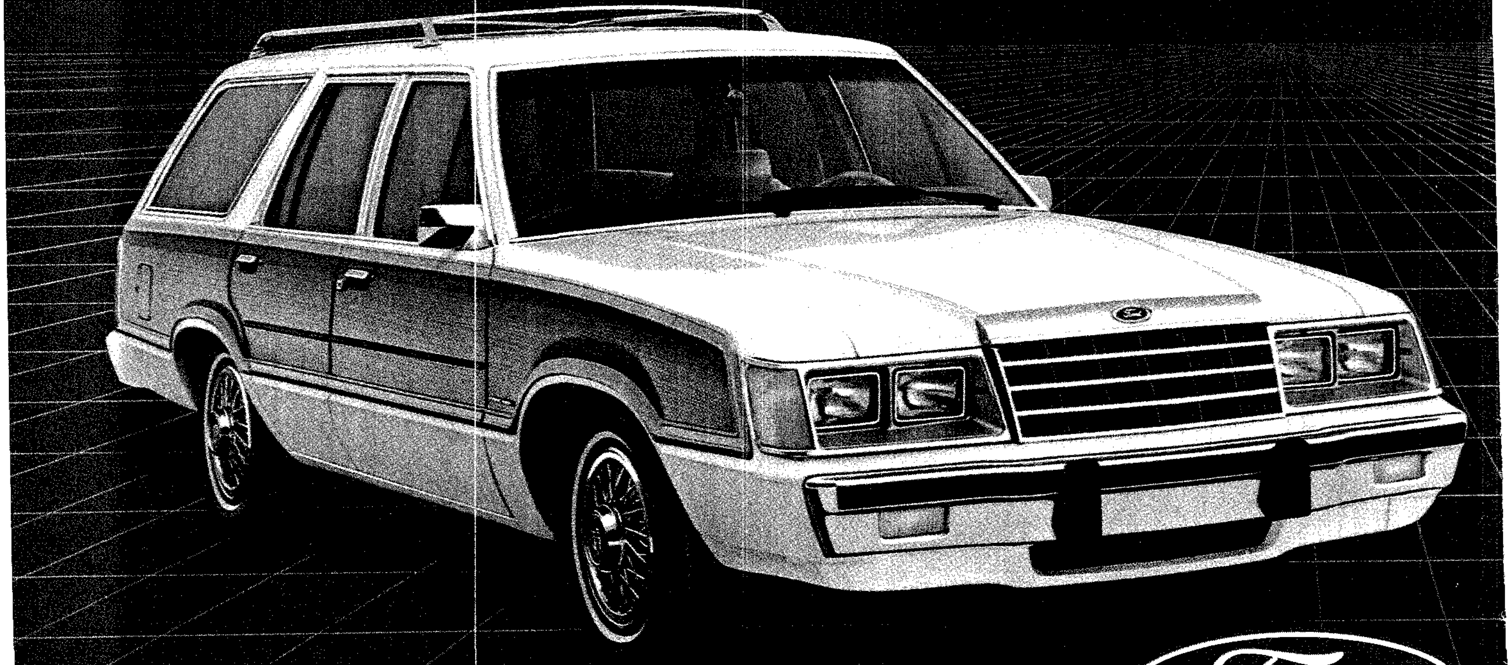

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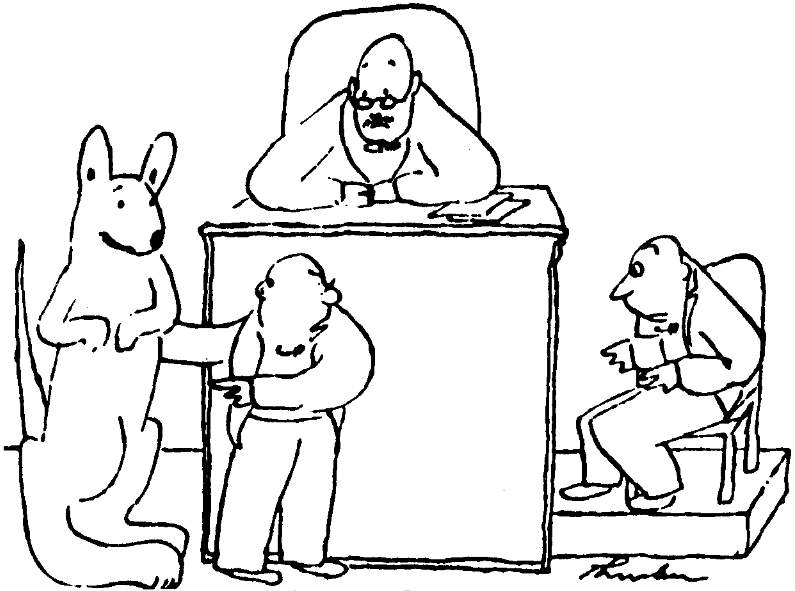
of each department (Palmerston remarked during one Cabinet row, "Gentlemen, it doesn't matter what we agree on, provided we all agree") —is unworkable in this country. John Kennedy said once, when his Cabinet officers began to quit in a huff and his Vice-President complained about being unconsulted, "I can sympathize with the way they feel, but in this job the only people you can work with all the time are the people who see the overnight cables." Mr. Cannon doesn't go much into this sort of problem. But he is unflinchingly persuasive about the force of Reagan's small-town upbringing on his political behavior. I say "unflinchingly" because in tracing the pattern of Reagan's emotional conflict between the old American myth and the new American realities Mr. Cannon is sympathetic and yet ruthlessly detached. He is the very rare case of a biographer who is a friend of his subject and neither forfeits his judgment nor makes a show of it.

The myth that Reagan clings to was real in his boyhood and youth. Mr. Cannon paints a scrupulous picture of Dixon, Illinois, in the first thirty years of this century—its origins, manners, mores, and sentimentalities: fifty pages or so of a Sinclair Lewis vignette, in all the documentary detail but without the disdain. Dixon is today, like most other Depression small towns, a period piece. But not to Reagan. It provides the instant allegory for all the great social issues. Twelve million unemployed are begged to scan the help-wanted ads. He reads aloud the letter of a wife in Selma, Alabama. Faced with the depressed farmers of Minnesota, he seizes on a story in a local paper about how sixteen farmers had "donated their time, their calluses and their equipment" to a fellow-farmer injured in an accident. Last Christmas, he asked every private employer, big or small, to hire just one more worker. At the end of January, he announced that the budget might be balanced "if all of us simply tried to live up to the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule"—probably the one indisputable remark of his Presidency.

It is the Dixon way: the helping hand to the neighbor; the Community Chest; compassion for individual drunks, with no thought of financing a project for alcoholics. Confronted by scores of Mr. Cannon's recollections of these impulsive kindnesses, one gets the impression that when Reagan set-



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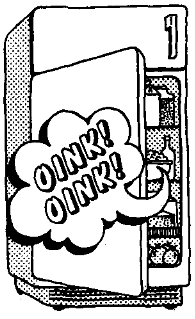

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tles in his office to the knotty business of government he does so as a man defeated in his primary aim—that of giving aid and comfort to the "truly needy" you can touch and see. Pressed by his own House whip to face a retrenchment in military spending, he shakes his head, perks up, and places a happy call to the astronauts on the Columbia. A recognizable figure—a symbolic figure—emerges from Mr. Cannon's wealth of such anecdotes. It is the hero, almost any hero, of a Frank Capra movie. It is a role honestly felt. It is passionately well meant. Surely, to millions of his supporters, it is what he was elected for: to revitalize "traditional values" in an America rendered frightening and incomprehensible by such things as juggernaut corporations, internationally organized terrorism, a continental drug culture, huge increases in crime, the rotting of the maintenance grid of the cities, the steady menace of the Soviet Union, and the nightmare presence of the nuclear bomb. But it is not enough. The Norman Rockwell–Booth Tarkington tour of America on which the President acts as so engaging a guide is not the America he is talking to. When Reagan left Dixon, early in 1933, in the pit of the Depression, one American in four worked on a farm; today the figure is one in thirty. The percentage of the population working in government has nearly doubled. Two-thirds of the population lives in metropolitan areas and most of the rest in the split-level house on the freeway. Italian shoes have depressed Brockton, Massachusetts, and Japan has anachronized Henry Ford.

On the conduct of foreign policy, Mr. Cannon's charity is sorely strained by the inescapable fact that when Reagan came to the White House his ignorance of foreign affairs was at least as vast as his ignorance of state issues when he went to Sacramento. Suddenly pitched into the turmoil of geopolitics, and tossing around in it with the help of lifelines thrown out from the State Department's many "desks," he discovered yet another incomprehensible world. And whenever he shook himself free of it and got out around the country he yielded again to his "basic, optimistic simplicity" and announced what he couldn't help believing: that everywhere the Russians were in back of it all, and that the good American was the one who stood up to them. He once wrote, "I'm a sucker for hero worship." And it be-

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ins to appear that this endearing boy-sh trait, aggravated by his years of ootball and radio sportscasting, undisurbed by much reading of history, is he germ of a locker-room foreign policy. No other President has so spontaneously responded to the Russians in heir own hectoring terms. Last October, when the leaders of France, Great Britain, and West Germany, to say nothing of their press and peoples, were fretting with concern over what even the *Wall Street Journal* was later to call the President's "militant rhetoric, arms buildup and policy inconsistencies," Reagan was saying that the NATO alliance had never been in better shape, and was proclaiming that "America is recovery-bound, and the world knows it." This bluster carried all the conviction of the standard phrase that preceded Andrei Gromyko's many recitals of preposterous untruths about the United States: "As is well known . . ." At the end, the best Mr. Cannon can do is to hope that the President's "rhetorical belligerence against the Soviets" may come to be seen as "a necessary precondition to international negotiation leading to genuine arms reduction." Unless the belligerence is muted by the conviction that the Russians have to be lived with, that is a wispy hope.

Now Reagan is in the always uncomfortable third year, when the momentum of reforming zeal is stalled, and when the American people, after two years' exposure to the new Moses, discover that he is not Moses after all. It is also the time when the bridegroom must become a husband. The gallant fantasies of the honeymoon give way to the calculation of rent, food, and insurance premiums; and there are many indications that the transition will be more painful than usual. It has already been made clear to Reagan that he may seek but will not find many more cuts in the rate of domestic spending. He has been reluctantly converted to the belief that Social Security is sacrosanct—if not the traditional method of its funding. The White House concedes that new taxes—whether known as "revenue enhancements," "user fees," "indexing repeal," "contingency surcharges," or by any other euphemism—will be imposed first gently and then, if the worst happens, drastically, so that Reagan could repeat his dazzling Sacramento U-turn, whereby he came in as the great Tax Saver and went out as the sponsor of "tax increases that were the largest, up to that time, in

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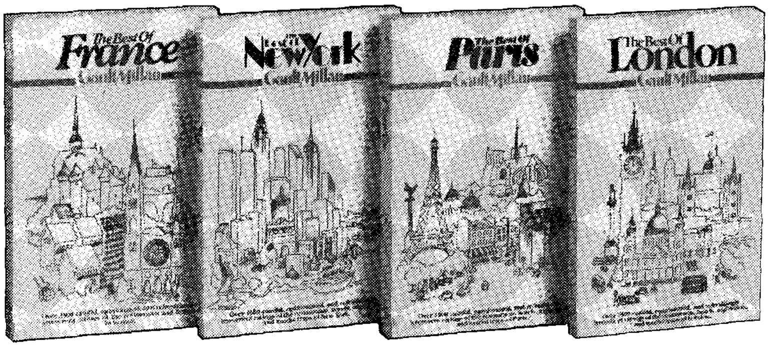
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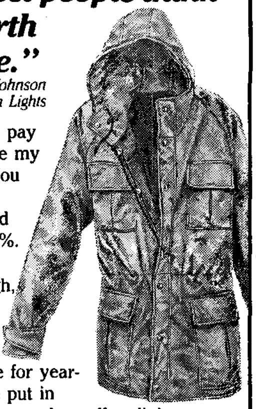

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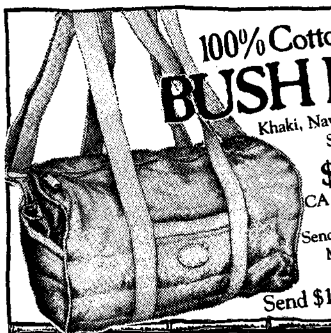

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California history." Public works, derided only a month or two ago as a Democratic boondoggle, are now being promoted in bipartisan bills. And, for all the ringing pledges of an untouchable defense budget, fifty-five billion dollars is to be saved in five years. The President may yet have to acknowledge that the likeliest basing mode for the MX missile will be the deep six.

If these things come to pass, it may be that, as Mr. Cannon suggests, Reagan's mission is "to be the salvation of the New Deal." It is safe to say that the President does not yet consider this to be his purpose in life. But it seems as certain as anything can be that he will be very busy from now on reverting to his old "proclivity for doing what [is] necessary at the expense of his rhetoric," even though time and again down the years of Mr. Cannon's vivid recall we see him regarding half a loaf as defeat and compromise as anything but the proper process of democratic government. It is not so much that he doesn't have the hang of it as that he looks on getting the hang of it as a weasel term for giving in. His good fortune at the moment is that he has by his side three men—Senator Howard Baker, Senator Robert Dole, and Secretary of State George Shultz—who give every sign of subscribing to James Madison's view of the essence of good government: the reconciling of factions, "ambition counteracting ambition." The ghost of Harold Laski may take a wan consolation from the thought that one member of the Reagan Administration who has the hang of it is a professor.

—ALISTAIR COOKE

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

THE RAGE OF THE VULTURE, by Barry Unsworth (Houghton Mifflin; $15.95). In this new novel, as in his brilliant "The Idol Hunter," of 1980, Mr. Unsworth takes us back to 1908—to the last year of the tottering Ottoman Empire and its terrified sultan, Abdul-Hamid II—and he shows us again a man ingrown and almost dehumanized by the force of an obsession. His damaged hero is an Englishman, Captain Robert Markham, an officer on the staff of the British military attaché in Constantinople. He is a married man with a son of ten, with a fine house and a comfortable life, but a man who twelve years before,

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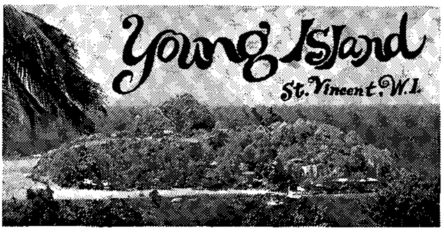

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in his first visit to Turkey, saw his Armenian fiancée raped and murdered in a religious pogrom—a pogrom from which he escaped by frantically proclaiming his Englishness. Mr. Unsworth lets us see early that Markham's torment is shame, and then coolly follows him down through one desperate, driven, self-destructive impulse after another. This is not an analytical novel. It is a novel of revelation through action, and a very fine and haunting one.

THE LONG EXILE, by Georges Simenon, translated from the French by Eileen Ellenbogen (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $15.95). The first appearance in English of a novel first published in 1936. It would also seem to be the longest novel in the Simenon oeuvre—almost three times the length of his usual work. Length, unfortunately, does not much become Simenon. His terse, elliptical, suggestive approach to character and scene loses most of its impact when stretched, as it is here, over nearly four hundred pages. The story has to do with two young Parisian anarchists (a woman who has killed a man, and her passive, intellectual lover) who flee France on a freighter, live for a time in the riverine jungle of Colombia, then escape to Tahiti, with a big, tough, drunken sea captain usually in attendance; and, for all its size, it is pinched and slight.

FIRST WINE, by Jack Dunphy (Louisiana State; $14.95). Jackie, the narrator of this graceful story, begins with his first taste of his Aunt Frances's dandelion wine, made (during Prohibition) in the basement of her North Philadelphia row house. Then he moves forward to the summer he spent, when he was twelve, with his Aunt Frances at the Bucks County farmhouse where her jilted sister and their widowed mother live. Accompanying Jackie and Aunt Frances is a male cat named Matilda ("because he was such a high flyer, Aunt Frances said"). Joining them at the farmhouse are four young men (Aunt Frances has a circle of friends, all young and male), including a sad one named Happy; the four will help build a wing on the house. The story of that summer features a pair of Indian boys (sons of a long-legged and dignified man who helps, for a while, with the wing's construction) and the Ter-

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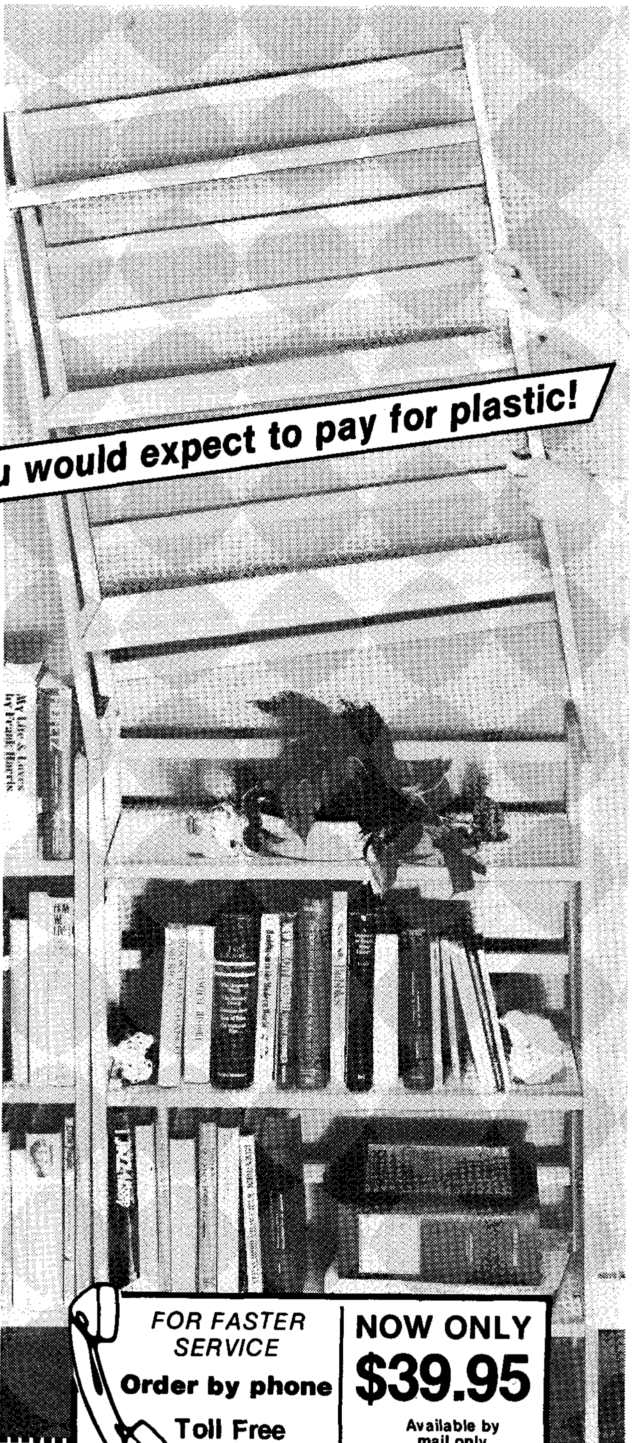

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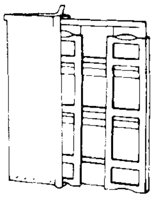

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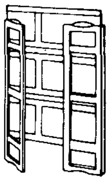

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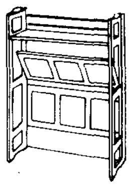

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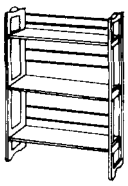

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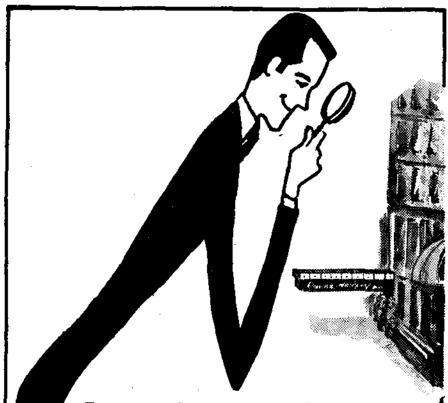
rible Little Mrs. O'Shea, mother of one of the young men, who wins Jackie's heart on the telephone before she pays a surprise visit. Jackie's recollections of the adults' conversations are conveyed without cuteness, and the story has a shapeliness (it ends back in North Philadelphia, where other adults have been at work, in a way, on Aunt Frances's house) that never seems strained.

FOOLS, by Forbes Bramble (Hamish Hamilton; $16.95). Pertinent, caustic verses from the fifteenth-century German poem "The Ship of Fools" head the chapters of this neatly designed black comedy about an English architect whose own designs—on blueprints and on colleagues—are models of bad planning. Salt water, rainwater, and various water-based props are featured in several amusing episodes—in a waterlogged boat, at a flooded building site, and, in the final scene, around a rooftop swimming pool—but Mr. Bramble (an English architect, whose fifth novel this is) interprets the marine metaphor in the broadest way, and makes his hero nearly capsize his life in a psychiatrist's office, at a garden party, on a commuter train, and in a cornfield as well.

GENERAL

DOWN AND OUT IN THE GREAT DEPRESSION: LETTERS FROM THE "FORGOTTEN MAN," edited by Robert S. McElvaine (University of North Carolina; $23 cloth, $8.95 paper). As historians try to find ways to bring the reality of the Depression to generations who cannot remember it, they seek sources that did not seem noteworthy during the years when all Americans knew what that economic crisis meant. Mr. McElvaine is such a historian, and he has quarried these hundred and seventy-three letters from government archives and from collections like the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library. The letters were written to President and Mrs. Roosevelt, and to senators and other government officials, by ordinary citizens, many of whom were in grave financial trouble. The letters show the effects of the passage of time (shock changing to despair) and the effects of government policies on diverse groups—children, the aged, farmers, blacks. They demonstrate as well the variety of attitudes that Americans took toward their own



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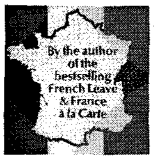
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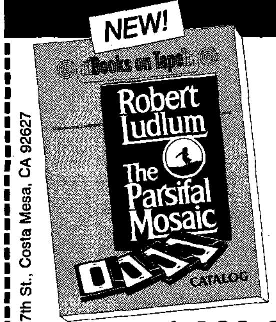

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plight and the nation's. Mr. McElvaine includes samples from a hostile minority who attack the New Deal, but in general the correspondence not only supports government policies but expresses intense personal involvement with public officials; to many Americans the Roosevelts seemed their friends. With first-rate explanatory essays by the editor, and contemporary photographs.

WRITINGS AND REFLECTIONS, by Roderick Haig-Brown, edited by Valerie Haig-Brown (University of Washington; $16.95). Haig-Brown, who died in 1976, at the age of sixty-eight, emigrated from his native England in 1927 and took up residence in British Columbia, where he worked as, among other things, a logger, a guide, a writer, and—although he had no formal legal training—a provincial-court judge. A writer from the time he was eighteen years old, he produced some two dozen books, many of them about nature and the environment, his principal interests. This volume, the final one in a trilogy edited by his daughter, brings together twenty-four of his essays and sketches on a wide range of subjects, from a visit he and his grandfather made to Thomas Hardy at Max Gate in 1924, through the problems of pollution and conservation, to the quality of life itself: "It is unfortunate that we have in large degree come to equate the importance of work with the money paid for it." Haig-Brown's writing is understated, his humor subdued; reading some of these essays can evoke the feeling of fireside conversation with an old friend on a blustery winter's night.

THE PURITAN MOMENT: THE COMING OF REVOLUTION IN AN ENGLISH COUNTY, by William Hunt (Harvard; $36). This exceptional study introduces us to the everyday life of Essex from the last decades of the first Elizabeth to the outbreak of the Civil War, in 1642, in order to explain why that county supported Parliament and the rebellion against Charles I. Mr. Hunt's details suggest that economic changes, hard times, and inadequate provisions for relief impelled the educated people of the area to seek explanations for their difficulties: the Puritan "culture of discipline," which attacked such sins as drunkenness and idleness, promised a cure for poverty, while Puritan clergymen explained

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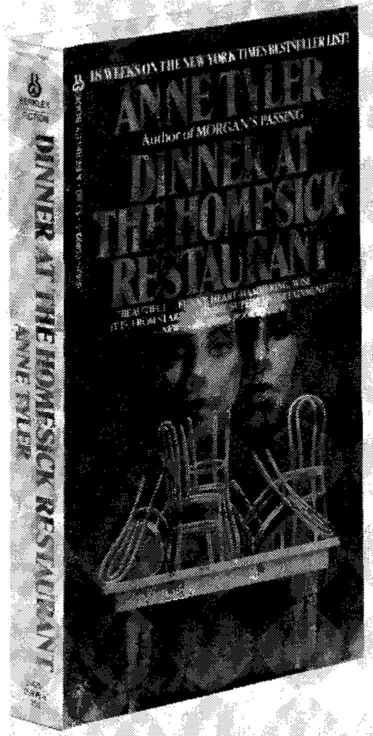
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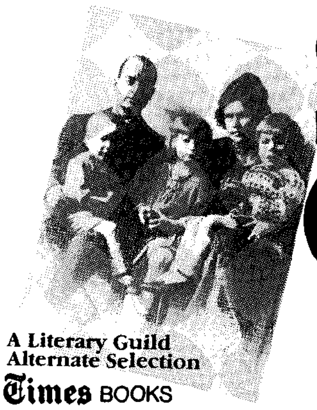

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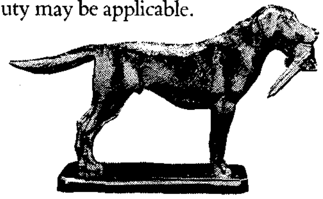

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distress as God's punishment for irreligion. Mr. Hunt demonstrates how practical issues framed in theological terms became savage ideological battlegrounds, and how Charles's egregiously inept policies disturbed an already troubled population. Essex was a great source of early migration to New England: we recognize town names, such as Dedham and Braintree; and we meet Roger Williams and Thomas Hooker, among others, before they depart to enter American history.

CHINA DIARY, by Stephen Spender and David Hockney (Abrams; $28.50). When the authors of this attractive-looking travel book were discussing what form to give their record of a trip through China in the summer of 1981, Hockney, the artist, said, "I think the book should be . . . a bit bitty—like life—patched up in some way," and that, unhappily, is what it turns out to be. The two men crossed China from Peking to Hong Kong, from Sian to Nanking, always accompanied by an official guide. They visited the usual communes, factories, temples, people's parks, and schools; they made a special effort to talk to poets, writers, artists, and art students; they ruminated on the effects of the Cultural Revolution, on the relationship of China and the Soviet Union, on the future of the People's Republic. None of this goes very deep. There are more than a hundred photographs, and there are nearly forty drawings and watercolors by Hockney, which—compared with what he did, for instance, on a trip to Egypt—seem perfunctory, and unilluminating about China or anything else. Five of the drawings are portraits of Spender.

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UH-HUH DEPARTMENT

[*From the Grants Pass* (*Ore.*) *Daily Courier*]

KELSO, Wash. (AP)—A report saying that a break in a debris dam at the foot of Mount St. Helens could bury towns in mud up to 40 miles away should not be cause for alarm, officials say.

•

Q: When is the best time to make carnation cuttings? B.C., Covina

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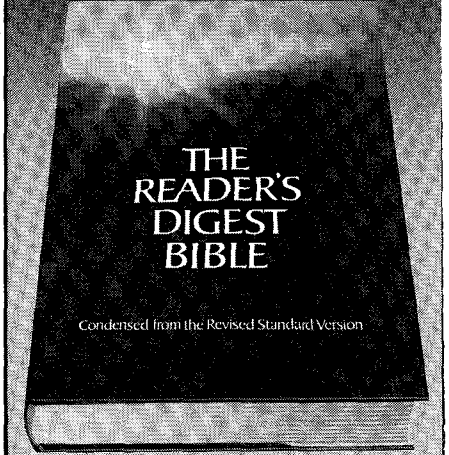

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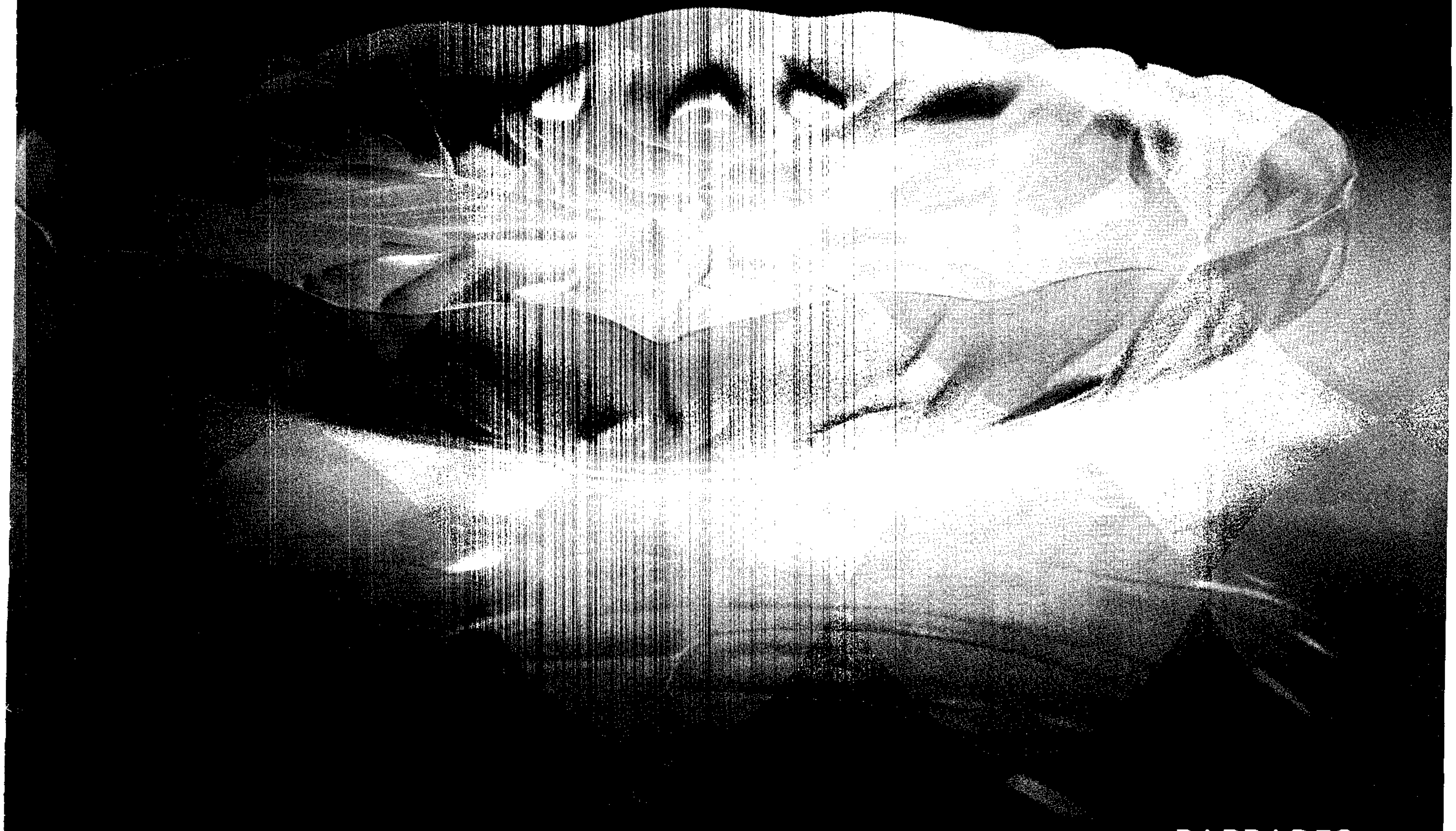

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